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Letters to the Editor

The Indomitable Irishry

Sir,—What follows has been prompted by John Boland's article, 'Still The Indomitable Irishry', which appeared in your publication on August 27th, and attempts to bring to bear on Mr. Boland's case terms to which he makes no reference. Mr. Boland's case is implied in the title of his article,

'. . . whereby the poet makes false capital out of his Irishness. Its methods involve an abuse of nationalism and/or patriotism. It is the poetic equivalent of the English comedians' stock notion of Irish character. Even Yeats was not immune to the practice . . .'

The following lines from 'Under Ben Bulben' are quoted in illustration:

The holiness of monks, and after
Porter drinkers' randy laughter.

Disconnected from the body of the stanza in Yeat's poem, these lines might indeed be thought to imply what Mr. Boland says they do. But the implications of the stanza *as a whole* are something else again. The stanza evokes, briefly but forcefully, the variety of the life of the place being celebrated. Here are some of the lines immediately before and after those quoted above:

Sing the peasantry, and then
Hard-riding country gentlemen,
Sing the lords and ladies gay
That were beaten into the day
Through seven heroic centuries.

Apart from quoting lines out of context in order to support his agrument, Mr. Boland is guilty of reading his quotation almost as literally as if it were prose and not poetry. He oversimplifies *part* of a complete *poetic* statement into 'a piece of newspaper reportage', denying the primacy of the entire stanza's poetic truth in order to isolate a slogan.

This practice is exemplified in his treatment of one of John Montague's poems. He praises Montague's 'fine lore poems'—'The Trout', 'The Room', 'The Same Gesture', for example—but denigrates the same poet for writing 'Murphy In Manchester' (*Poisoned Lands*, 1961). In that poem, in the terms of Mr. Boland's case, Montague 'makes false capital out of his Irishness'. If that is correct, then what about poems like 'The Wild Dog Rose', 'The Sean Bhean Vocht', 'A Lost Tradition', 'Like Dolmens Round My Childhood, The Old People', expressions of the same cluster of concerns which gave rise to 'Murphy'? Many of Montague's love poems *are* very fine, but my own opinion is that those I have just named represent not only an authentic response to a particular environment and its emotional wealth, but that ultimately they relate Montague to a poetic tradition which reveals more fully than do the love poems what it is to be an Irish poet. In 'A Lost Tradition' we read:

Scattered over the hills, Tribal
And place names, uncultivated pearls.
No rock or ruin, dun or dolmen
But show memory defying cruelty
Through an image encrusted name.

What gives rise to lines like these is the concern for a particular locality, the significance of which is reflected in the lives of the individuals who compose it. Thus, in 'The Sean Bhean Vocht' the old woman's last days are described:

In the groove a running down record,
Heavy with local misery.

Such poetry reflects an awareness of what D. H. Lawrence once described as 'The Spirit of Place', the unique character of the life of a place manifested in the peculiar quality of each individual existence there. To conceive of tradition in this way is to experience it richly and communally. It is into this tradition, an evocative feel for places and people, that 'Murphy In Manchester' fits. Murphy's rural gait and unselfconscious gape in a strange place is not the work of a poet catering to cross-Channel tastes; Murphy's behaviour, which Mr. Boland finds so embarrassing, is of much deeper significance. Mr. Boland goes some way towards extenuating Montague by admitting the value of the love poems. But this is not enough. He either ignores or is as unaware of the value of 'Murphy' in the context of Montague's later work in the same vein (and ultimately to a particular tradition of poetry) as are those tourists whose interpretation of such work would probably make every one of us blush. But a poet does not write for tourists, nor is he responsible for their misplaced and superficial reading.—Yours, etc.,

TOM HALPIN.
31 Leinster Square,
Rathmines,
Dublin 6
1-10-'71

Conditions in Mountjoy

Sir,—As someone who has worked in Mountjoy jail for the past few months I would fully endorse your article by S. Doyle in the last issue. Conditions today in Mountjoy could be compared to the treatment of mentally ill people 200 years ago. There are basically two schools of thought with regard to the treatment of prisoners, from the hierarchy of the Department of Justice down to the most junior prison officer. On the one hand you have those who think prisoners are animals and should be treated as such wtih strict discipline. That they are inherently evil and a danger to society, etc. Of course, when prisoners are treated in this way they react against this, and prevent it from succeeding. The second point of view is that the majority of prisoners are victims of their social environment, and it is inevitable that they should end up in this way. There is, for example, a direct connection between poverty and crime. It is quite logical for a starving man to steal a loaf of bread. In any case, truth will eventually bring about humane conditions in Ireland's jails. If you should need information on the conditions in the jail in detail I will be glad to supply them. You must, however, realise that my name must not be used on this letter or I should face serious consequences.—Yours, etc.,

NAME WITH EDITOR.

FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW
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The Blind Eye

THOSE WHO IMPOSE any form of censorship—be they of the State or Church — share some common assumptions which are, more often than not, ill-founded. The first of these is that they are endowed with a superior judgement as to what is fit and proper for the rest of the public to be appraised of. The second, which is of course related to this, is that the public is either incapable of discerning the truth or is unfit to be confronted with reality. The recent directive from the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs to R.T.E. exactly fits this pattern. He and the Cabinet have decided in their superior wisdom that the Irish public should be sheltered from the sight and sound of known I.R.A. personalities appearing on television or radio. They apparently believe that a public which has absorbed and survived a decade of every known nonsense on the screen, and an almost continuous portrayal of violence, can be unwittingly seduced by a few men in trench coats. If such be the case, then it is a curious assessment of the intelligence of the public which elected them in the first place to the position from which they now exercise their censorship.

Specifically the Minister has directed that the R.T.E. Authority should refrain from broadcasting "any matter that could be calculated to promote the aims and activities of any organisation which engages in, promotes, encourages or advocates the attaining of any political objectives by violent means". This directive—the first ever resort to the mandatory powers contained in Section 31 of the Broadcasting Authority Act 1960—is vague enough to include many potential situations, and it could certainly apply to the N.F.A. if they repeated their roadblock activities in the future. But over the short term it will ensure that whatever explanation is offered for the guerilla war that is now being waged in Belfast and elsewhere, will not come directly from one of the principal belligerents.

If anything, the public needs more and not less information on the activities, plans, ambitions, and personalities of the I.R.A. North and South of the Border. For better or for worse, members of that organisation have been dictating the pace of the crisis especially over the past eighteen months. Whether or not one approves of these activities is beside the point. The I.R.A. exists; it exerts a major influence on our political destiny at this time and it is better to understand that influence than to pretend to ignore it.

But even more important than this are the twin democratic principles of free expression and the right to information that have been violated by the imposition of this censorship. It is ironic that, despite the far more critical situation in the North, there have been no attempts to muzzle the media there. The Fianna Fail Government has now taken the first step in this direction—as indeed it first threatened to introduce internment. It is entirely possible that its corrupting lead in this respect too will now be smugly emulated in the North. If so, the Government here will find itself wrong-footed once again. Like the arms trial and the internment threat, the curb on R.T.E. is another case of overkill, executed apparently without a thought to the possible repercussions elsewhere.

The I.R.A. is a reality. The Border is a reality. The war is a reality. Turning a blind eye on any of these inter-related factors in the crisis, be it at Chequers or on the national broadcasting service, will solve nothing, and settle nothing. Sooner or later the realities have to be confronted—and better sooner than later.

Fine Gael

Neither Here Nor There

FINE GAEL is the only Southern political party which has not been split or has not had to endure serious internal dissent as a result of the Northern crisis. Fianna Fail has its open dissidents within the party; it has Aontacht Eireann as a magnet for disaffected Fianna Fail supporters waiting outside the party. Within Labour there is a clear and growing conflict of views between the Michael Mullen's 'ginger group' and the moderate pacifists whose chief spokesman is Conor Cruise O'Brien. Sinn Fein has its Gardiner St. and its Kevin St. Fine Gael alone has survived the maelstrom with its unity intact.

That this is so could mean a number of possible things. It could mean that Fine Gael's party discipline is now on a par with that of Fianna Fail's in the pre-Lynch era. It could mean that there is genuine agreement within the party on the policy and behaviour of the party's leadership at the present time. It could mean that the events in the North move the majority of Fine Gael T.D.s less passionately and less intensely than they do members of the other parties. Or it could mean that the main opposition party has quite simply not been able to find any meaningful and effective role to play in the greatest national crisis of the past half century.

It would be unfair and wrong to suggest that the Fine Gael leaders and rank-and-file members care less or are less concerned than members of other parties. Within the Dail Deputy Paddy Harte has made some of the most effective and constructive speeches to date. Garrett FitzGerald has been analysing the problems and prescribing diagnoses with his usual industry. In addition he is said to have considerable influence on the thinking of James Callaghan's Northern policy. At a time when Iveagh House had no Northern policy Senator John Kelly was filling the pages of *The Irish Times* with his own detailed propositions. And for all his maverick ways Deputy Gerry L'Estrange does feel strong to the point of apoplexy about the Government's failure to move against illegal and armed organisations in the South.

Fine Gael's problem then is not so much that there is not adequate concern within the party but that this concern has not been able to translate itself into effective political action.

One of the biggest obstacles against an effective role for Fine Gael in the North is its inability to align itself with any of the existing forces within the North or to find an opposite number with which it could co-operate. The fact that Fine Gael is the party of the Treaty; the memory of the Boundary Commission and the fact that W. T. Cosgrave was prepared to talk with Sir James Craig damned the party in the eyes of the Nationalists who in spite of the patent failure of de Valera's policies and in spite of the forgetfulness of later Governments still looked to Fianna Fail.

Labour has been able to establish working contacts with not just the SDLP but also NILP and the British Labour party and, whatever about the effectiveness or not of these links, Labour at least can be seen to be directly involved in some of the action. Fine Gael's great difficulty is that it is seen by the main Northern groups as being either peripheral or irrelevant and not really worth bothering about.

The difficulty inherent in this type of situation should not be underestimated, but even making full allowances for them, the leadership of Liam Cosgrave and the role of some of his front-bench colleagues has been far from inspiring. By managing to make no impact whatsoever he has allowed Jack Lynch become the sole spokesman for the bulk of moderate Fine Gael opinion; neither he nor his front-bench colleagues have managed to get across to the electorate that Fine Gael does have a positive and definite Northern policy; his banishing of one of the party's few effective Northern voices—Paddy Harte—to the back-benches is indicative of a short-sighted pre-occupation with internal party wrangling and power-play.

Q. WHAT V.I.P. met another V.I.P. for a secret discussion in a hotel in Cannes, South of France, in the early part of September ?

A. The first V.I.P. was Mr. Charles J. Haughey, T.D. And the second? Dr. P. J. Hillery, Minister for External Affairs, and the author of that celebrated statement in London, July 1970, that "he would be glad to see Charlie Haughey back in the Cabinet."

Since that meeting the question marks surrounding Paddy Hillery's role in the Cabinet's policy vis-a-vis the North and the Chequers talks particularly, continue to multiply. It will be recalled that Dr. Hillery took no part in either session of the talks with the British Prime Minister even though his opposite number at least joined the leaders for lunch. But even more ominous was the fact that he did not attend the final meeting with S.D.L.P. members before the Taoiseach left for Chequers. His place was taken — as it seems to be increasingly — by Mr. George Colley. Now it is rumoured that at last Friday's Cabinet meeting he disassociated himself strongly from the Chequers talks, the Taoiseach's approach to them, and their failure to produce anything, particularly on internment. On this line he is said to have been supported by Brian Lenihan.

And so the plot thickens . . .

There is a great danger for Fine Gael in all of this and its failure to become effectively involved could yet prove very damaging to the fortunes of the party. Partly through its own lack of 'killer instinct' and partly because of Fianna Fail's incredible capacity for survival Fine Gael failed to destroy Fianna Fail or even to force an election after the crisis and revelations of 1970. And then after a series of blunders by the weakest Cabinet the country has ever had, it looked as if Fianna Fail was about to destroy itself and Fine Gael might be given what it had been unable to get for itself. Then came the escalation of the Northern crisis and with it the elevation of Jack Lynch to an international role and the strengthening of his own position within the party and the country. With the threat of civil war and a general realisation of the gravity of the issues involved Fine Gael's preoccupation with such issues as the Gibbons censure motion assumed an air of pathetic irrelevance; its inability to assert itself into the Northern scene made it look almost as if the party had ceased to exist.

The position could well be at present that if Fine Gael does not find some means of making a meaningful and distinctive contribution on this most controversial of all questions it may find it increasingly difficult to convince the thousands of voters who desperately want a new Government that it has the makings of that alternative. This is easier said than done and it would be more than ironic if the Northern crisis which initially did so much to weaken Fianna Fail was to be ultimately responsible for helping to continue that party in office. Fine Gael would be foolish to ignore this possibility.

"... and now a pollution warning ..."

Courtesy of Private Eye

Fianna Fail

A November Election?

RUMOURS OF AN IMMINENT election, possibly in early November, have been sweeping through the Dail corridors over the past couple of weeks—to some extent in all parties but especially in Fine Gael who claim to see all sorts of pointers and indicators in Fianna Fail activity at constituency level.

The argument is that the Taoiseach is at a high point on his wheel of fortune—perhaps as high as he will get on this swing—and that he is under strong party pressure to forestall the Gibbons "no-confidence" motion and all other Opposition and "dissident" wiles by asking the people now for a fresh mandate. It is an argument with many attractions—if one leaves out of account the personality of Jack Lynch. However, one can hardly ignore the fact that he is not by nature a voluntary "goer"; going to the country and being dragged to it are vastly different things.

Any Taoiseach thinking of an election cannot afford to make the decision on his brightest and most optimistic prospects; he must also look at the worst side and strike some sort of intermediate position. On that basis, Mr. Lynch at this moment could hardly be giving himself more than 72 seats in a new election on the 144-seat Dail. Assuming that he would retain government with 72 (a debatable matter), it would not be secure and could at best hope for a lifetime of one to two Budgets.

At the present time, Mr. Lynch has a pretty secure three years to run with 73 seats. He could be hit by adverse by-elections, and theoretically all possible "dissidents" combined with all others could put him out. But the "dissidents" are not acting as a unit and even if they were, they would have no guarantee if they decided to strike on any issue, even the Gibbons motion, that there would be a full muster of all Deputies other than Mr. Lynch's party in the lobby with them. Indeed, it it is not unfair to say that no two dissidents" could be sure of each other on any issue, even the Gibbons motion.

Another argument is that Mr. Lynch might decide to go to the country now before Mr. Kevin Boland's party gets too strong, to try to nip it in the bud as it were. Again, an interesting speculation but with equally interesting alternatives. It is widely assumed, for instance, that Mr. Boland's candidates in several constituencies, while failing to secure election themselves, would take seats away from Fianna Fail and give them to Fine Gael and Labour. But in Ireland, rural Ireland particularly, habit dies hard, and it is very doubtful indeed if there would be the volume of "plumpers" which would bring about such a change. Most of those who would turn to a Boland candidate would give second preferences to their old familiar Fianna Fail candidates, for reasons which have far more to do with neighbourliness and goodness-of-heart than with politics.

"There's nothing to worry about. Undergoing terminal experience isn't as bad as it sounds."

Courtesy of Private Eye

Jack Lynch is just the man to weigh up all these things, and his decision might well be to go to the country this autumn. But it would be far more in character for him to keep his back to the wall and stand firm on his 73 seats plus two independents and let June of 1974 take care of itself. His answer to the Gibbons motion might well be to anticipate it when the Dail resumes by asking for a vote of confidence in himself as Taoiseach, and in *each* member of his Government. The "boys" have voted for that one before.

The North 1

John Taylor: The Supreme Individualist

IT CAME AS NO surprise to Northerners to hear last week that John Taylor, their peppery Minister of State at the Ministry of Home Affairs, had decided to boycott a meeting with Lord Carrington, Mr. Heath's Secretary of State for Defence. They have come to expect this sort of thing from him.

Obviously he and Lord Carrington would have had quite a lot to say to each other. Mr. Taylor is Mr. Faulkner's No. 2 at Home Affairs, and is constantly talking about the need for tightening up security, which is Carrington's responsibility. But the British Minister chose not to address a full Stormont Cabinet, but a few selected members, and Mr. Taylor included himself out. What he chose to gain by this fit of pique, over such a trifling point, is difficult to say. Right Wing friends like Harry West and John Brooke attended without a murmur. The best guess is that he thought it would go down well in his South Tyrone constituency, where they won't be happy until the "B" Specials get out their .303s again.

Some felt that it could be Taylor's last stand, but apparently not. Only two weeks earlier, he had been carpeted by Faulkner for a speech to Fivemiletown Unionists threatening resignation and promising support for a "third Force" if recruitment to the Ulster Defence Regiment did not pick up rapidly. A statement was hurriedly issued from Stormont Castle explaining the Government's support for the Westminster attitude to an armed militia force—"Any encouragement to form a force of any sort other than one lawfully-constituted would do the greatest possible damage to the vital interests of Northern Ireland" — and Mr. Taylor fully subscribed to it.

By any standards it looked like a severe dressing down for the cocky Mr. Taylor, and this is the way the political correspondents saw it. But the surprising thing was that the next day the Stormont public relations army was angrily denying that the statement implied any rebuke. Was Faulkner having second thoughts about the effect the reproof might have on Right Wing Unionists, who were right behind Mr. Taylor in what he said, or did it prove that — as many commentators had assumed—that the Minister of State was speaking his master's thoughts?

In fact, no one is able to say for sure what relations are like between Taylor and Faulkner. Some regard him as the Prime Minister's hatchet man, put up to say the things which Faulkner would like to, and can't. Others see him as a supreme individualist, who doesn't care particularly what his superiors think of him, so long as he keeps in with the hard-liners who run his constituency. Confident to the point of arrogance, he knows he has the ability and the political pull to find him a place in any Ulster Cabinet, so thin is the talent on the back bench.

He first pushed himself to the fore at university, where he was chairman of the Queen's Tory club, and made a name for himself consorting with Fine Gael juniors in Dublin at a time when this was frowned upon. At this period, he seems to have decided that the liberal card was the one to play, and it helped him get Glengall Street backing for the nomination for South Tyrone in the 1965 election. He won the seat, but soon found he was riding a tiger. South Tyrone Unionists are as Orange as they come, and although he has generally done their bidding, he will still admit privately that his backwoodsmen are a constant worry. Perhaps it has something to do with the fact that he is a stranger, from over the border in Armagh, where he still lives.

Another drawback was his close friendship with Austin Currie, who went through Queen's with him, and won East Tyrone for the Nationalists about the same time. For a time they stalked the corridors together, fighting the case for an extension of the motorway past Dungannon, but friendship turned to rivalry, with each trying to outshine the other in debate and then to distrust. Now they go out of their way to avoid each other, and critics of Currie accuse him of envy that one whom he considered his intellectual inferior has gone to the top.

When the tide turned against O'Neill, Taylor turned with it, and early in 1969 he was one of the "dissident dozen" — 12 members of the Unionist parliamentary party who signed a letter demanding that the Prime Minister must go. Cynics said he could see no hope of advancement under O'Neill, so he put his money and his vote on Faulkner for PM. O'Neillites don't forgive him for this, but he beat their candidate in the 1969 election and went on to get a place in the Chichester-Clark administration, moving up to Minister of State rank in August 1970. A civil engineer by profession who has scored some notable successes in with a future.

As one of the most articulate spokesmen for the solid West of the Bann Unionism, in the House and frequently on TV, he could hardly be overlooked, but both his Prime Ministers, Chichester-Clark and Faulkner, have had cause to regret his undisciplined tongue. Laying it on for the benefit of his constituents, he once told an Orange gathering that it was time to root the moderates out of the Unionist party. This earned him a public ticking-off, but before long he was attacking the army. "Too soft" he said, and despite his rather invidious role as junior Minister in charge of security, he somehow survived. Since those days, he has waged a low level war with the army command, constantly urging them to use more force, and earning him the dislike of general after general. It was rumoured a few months ago that hostilities had reached the point where the army was asking Faulkner to remove him, but nothing came of it.

Currently he has at least two public threats lodged with the Prime Minister, that if the drive against the I.R.A:. doesn't show more results, he will quit. He also improved his bogey man image with the Opposition when he warned after the July shootings in Derry that there would have to be more civilians shot in the months to come. But the most damaging rumour now in circulation is the one which links him with the internment swoop. Did he or did he not personally add the names of more than 100 Republicans to the 200 which had already been approved by Faulkner. This is how the story goes, and such is the inherent dislike for Taylor, among politicians of all kinds, that it persists.

In his early days, Taylor obviously saw himself as a future Prime Minister, and there is justification for saying that he has moulded his pragmatic, no-nonsense style on Faulkner himself. Potentially, at 34, he could go a long way in a Craig-type Government, and may already be manoeuvring towards this end. But he has made so many enemies, and so many would be glad to see his downfall, that his day may never come.

Q. Whatever became of Jim Gibbons?

A. On the first anniversary of the opening of the Arms Trial (second version) that is a very pertinent question, and we are happy to report that the Minister for Agriculture is alive and well — now. The reason for his noticeable absence during the summer can be traced to St. Luke's County Hospital in Kilkenny and an operation said to be for ulcers. There the father of eleven was visited by his good friend and patron, Mr. George Colley, and happily restored to health in time for the harvest.

The North 2

The Economic Survival

"THE SURPRISING THING," said the man at the Ministry of Commerce, "is that the Northern Ireland economy has shown such resilience." He was referring to the fact, that, despite the troubles, few major manufacturing concerns have shown signs of being directly affected. While this may be true, it is hardly surprising, since, for the most part, the bombers have left industrial plants alone. During the last year, only thirty firms—thirteen of which were in one building gutted by fire during a riot—have been forced to stop working because of malicious damage to their premises: and twenty-eight of these have already resumed, or decided to resume, production. The massive assistance which Stormont offers to such firms, however, was not sufficient to induce Setright Registers to maintain its 250 job operation in Northern Ireland, and the only other large employer of male labour—the Daily Mirror—has not yet reached a decision about the re-establishment of its printing process in the North. Significantly, both these firms are non-indigenous and neither had any financial or labour problems. It is too soon after the post-internment escalation to find more than these straws in the economic wind, but what seems certain is that the general atmosphere of unrest and persistent bombings are having an adverse long-term effect on the area's industrial prospects. Harland and Wolff's shipyard, dogged by labour problems since shortly after it received a "final" grant of £5 million from the British Government, is reported to be heading once again into financial trouble. The President of the Confederation of British Industry has said that "there is a distinct break in the flow of investment into Northern Ireland," and while Stormont's Commerce Ministry, in unusually vague fashion, has claimed "about 4,000 new jobs have been created since the beginning of the year," none of these have been established as a result of new firms arriving. And this figure must be set against the 6,500 new jobs needed this year for school-leavers coming on to the labour market, the 2,000 jobs lost because of general industrial decline—most of it attributable to Britain's economic troubles—and the 700 who have become unemployed as a direct result of the post-August troubles. It seems likely that the male unemployment rate of 10.8% will move in an upward direction while continuing street battles—with attendant absenteeism and the prospect of further politically-inspired work stoppages—bring greater loss of investment confidence.

The immediate and most noticeable effect of the Northern war, however, is in the service industry field in Belfast. Theatres, cabaret clubs, cinemas, and restaurants have all been badly hit. Patrons sufficiently determined to ignore the near crufew atmosphere in a city where public transport stops at 8 p.m. in many areas—and ceases altogether at 9.30 p.m.—have still to contend with risks from the nightly explosions which rock the city, and the annoyance of being evacuated from their chosen place of entertainment as a result of bomb hoaxes. Three of the eleven city-centre commercial ballrooms have closed down completely while most of the others now open only on one or two nights a week. Many restaurants close at tea-time, pubs have had their turnovers slashed, and all of the near empty hotels have reduced their staff. Already the lame ducks are beginning to fall. Last week Belfast's best known hotel—the Grand Central—closed its doors for the last time, and the goodwill of a twenty-one drier ladies hairdressing salon a few hundred yards from the City Hall is on offer for £350—a fraction of its normal market price. Many of the bomb-scarred stores in the down-town area are having their financial troubles. One city councillor has related on television the story of a drapery shop owner who took £7.50 during one Saturday morning of trading. Even the normally busy chain stores have felt the draught. There are persistent rumours that some of these intend to close down—at least temporarily.

(Continued in page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

While these reports are not very credible in the case of C. and A. Modes, Marks and Spencer, and other branches of large British combines, they are widespread enough for the management of at least one of these concerns to have called a staff meeting to reassure their employees. Many small shopkeepers have exhausted their limited capital reserves, and with banks now exercising greater caution in the granting of overdrafts, the path to the bankruptcy court is becoming well worn. Some one-man shops, such as those in the grocery or confectionery line have, paradoxically, boomed as business has moved away from the larger stores. But others have suffered mortal damage because of boycotts, or the fact that they are located in a no-man's land, or a bomb hazard zone. These traders envy their colleagues whose premises have been burned or bombed: they are the people who get the sympathy—and the compensation.

Last week, in a defiant "no surrender" statement the Chamber of Trade said that Belfast shopkeepers would survive with the same determination as Londoners had survived the Blitz. One wonders what sort of an echo these sentiments will have from those already driven from business: or when someone will call a halt to the internecine war of which the economic scorched earth tactic is a major part.

The North 3

Peoples Democracy Now

AFTER BRIAN FAULKNER'S *Internment claim that only men of violence had been picked up, it was the arresting and detention* of ten members of the People's Democracy, that, as much as anything, gave lie to this claim. It also served to bring a once important Northern grouping back into the public eye. Since the early days of the Civil Rights campaign and the subsequent drift in the North from marching to marksmanship, the influence of the People's Democracy had rapidly dwindled. The ending of massive street campaigns, the drifting away of Bernadette Devlin and Eamon McCann, the break with Queen's University, and the gradual spread of violence and the hardening of attitudes, all served to leave P.D. as the cinderella of the North. P.D's., influence had been strongest from late 1968 to the August pogroms of 1969; a period during which they had a powerful voice in the Civil Rights campaign. Burntollet, the second highest non-unionist pole in the 1969 general elections and Bernadette Devlin accepted by the catholics of Mid-Ulster as the compromise candidate to go to Westminster. Even more important, their consistent drive to educate the Civil Rights movement into a socialist, working-class union of the two elements in the North, their continual reminding of the reality of living in Jack Lynch's "Green Tory" republic, and their fresh and imaginative rethinking of a lot of Irish politics provided a crash-course in political education that has become evident ever since. Many of the reforms of the Downing Street Declaration were first mooted by P.D. in their 1969 election manifesto. the fact that to-day the S.D.L.P. consider the term socialist to be respectable is again due to something of P.D's. perseverance, as indeed, may many of Paisley's approaches to something of a "Protestant socialist" conscience be. But as the influence of their thought has grown, their power in terms of support and personal influence has faded rapidly.

The group is now dominated by Michael Farrell, whose rapid rise to prominence came via a brief time as a Comclerical student, then into Queen's, the Communist party, the Labour party and then the founding of his own Young Belfast Socialist Alliance. After P.D. was founded among liberal and slightly left wing elements at Queens, this grouping had a shotgun wedding with it and a subsequent domination, of it. It is now this group which mainly comprises P.D. After the breaking-away from the University, strict membership and something of a purging of libertarians was introduced. The movement became exclusive and many former members like Kevin Boyle drifted away into the C.R.A. or the Official Republican movement. Since that time P.D. persevered with a socialist involvement to complement its position on Civil Rights. The 1970 cement strike in the Republic drew its support, the ownership of Lough Neagh dispute, many other examples of direct action in housing and tenant associations, and the Belfast Bus fares protest.

One story of the latter illustrates very well what the P.D's. socialist programme has to contend with in the North. After gathering thousands of signatures against the escalating bus-fares in Belfast, they had produced as non-sectarian a list as Belfast has seen since the hungry thirties; Falls and Shankill, New Lodge and Ballymacarrett were all equally represented. The next move was to picket some of the property of the Lord Mayor Joseph Cairns, and P.D. decided on a furniture shop on the Shankill Road. But it all came to a sudden end when the picket was chased out by the local loyalist force of unemployed afternoon loungers with cries of "Go up to the Falls Road where they never pay their fares!"

The P.D's. newspaper "Free Citizen" (renamed since Internment "Unfree Citizen") continues to enjoy quite a large circulation. This is due to the fact that not only does it proclaim the party-line, it is also something of a Northern "Private Eye" revealing all types of fascinating facts about the Orange and B'-special qualifications of many Northern magistrates, senior civil-servants as well as much of the Army's private press briefings.

Following detention and release, the movement had gained something of a new authority, but it must be a cause of concern for its leaders to see anything of a greater role in the future for it. The rapid growth of Catholic Provisionalism and Protestant Paisleyism is widespread in the North. Despite the sophistication put on their movements by various leaders the Northern confrontation is now at its basic and dangerous. In all of this, the direct socialist appeal of the People's Democracy, while being the "good news" to the intellectually converted, is probably of less importance to the rioters than the Knights of Malta. It is probable that for future survival, P.D. will have to look to a coming together of other left-wing elements into a larger organisation. The Dublin Socialist Alliance League although spurned by the Labour party may be the beginning of this, or perhaps Gardiner Street Republicans could provide the basis for such a movement — however P.D. complain that the Provisionals are much more eager to talk to them than the Officials who treat them very arrogantly.

Census

Re-Drawing The Constituencies

THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS of the preliminary Census returns may be more profound than the effect on Dail seats—but regrettably or otherwise popular debate is much more likely to be focussed for a considerable time on the Dail position. It makes better pub talk, for one thing. It is not unimportant, of course. Adhering to the limits set out in the Constitution for parliamentary representation of the people, Dail membership must not now fall below about 100 seats, or rise above 148.

Those who believe in a smaller Dail will no doubt vigorously oppose any attempt to move up from the present 144 seats to the Constitutional maximum of 148, but all the experience to date indicates that the exigencies of public life and party welfare will give us the maximum number.

It is difficult to say, of course, whether the Government will agree that a revision of Constituencies is required at all at this time. We have the best part of a decade to go before we reach the mandatory 12-year limit, but there is a strong opinion that the Constitutional directive to revise is effective

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MARY KENNY
In London

IT IS NOT, OF COURSE, the most comfortable time in the course of history at which to be Irish in England. It is not that the English are directly hostile—they are merely ill-informed and curiously indifferent and they consistently show, like the Bourbons, that history has taught them nothing, it is that one's own feelings are thrown into such confusion. Tribal loyalties mingle with dearly-held principles of rational policy; emotional patriotic feelings, and indeed, conditioning, jostle with detached sense. It is an act of moral duplicity, as well as being a strain on the personal sense of identity and commitment, to earn one's living and make one's life in Britain, and to all intents and purposes, to be integrated with the English, and at the same time to wish to sabotage elements of that Constitution. It would not be so were one an anarchist, or a committed revolutionary, but it is under any other circumstances. And it is also the *crise de conscience* which many of the Irish in England go through during these times. Their "natural" sympathies might lie with the Republicans, while their homes, family circumstances and jobs are now deeply associated with Britain (if they have homes or jobs, which, of course, increasing numbers of the population do not).

I spend a lot of my time talking and thinking and reading about Northern Ireland, and being frustrated and infuriated by the remoteness of it all for most people that I meet and know—even the political liberals and radicals talk about it in fairly theoretical terms. When I lived in Dublin, I felt that Conor Cruise O'Brien's line—and in some respects, the theories of the Official Sinn Fein—were the right ones. One can't condone violence, one must recognise the rights of Northern Protestants, one must work for a pluralist, socialist society in the Republic.

Here in London, the Provisional deeply buried in one's marrow rises. The ancient tribal voices speak in one's heart. It is not really a properly-thought-out political idea—it is merely a reaction against the still enduring imperialism of many of the British. And there is hardly a more stalwart residue of jingoism than the British press, which daily drives me to distraction in its attitudes and terminology. I beseech the Editor and the News Editor not to have reporters refer to every civilian as a terrorist or every Catholic an extremist. Within their own lights, they are reasonable and listen to my lobbying, but since the basic attitude is that every Irish person has a gun up their knickers, I daresay they don't take it very seriously. Besides, Fleet Street, like me, is caught up in its own tribal feelings and political interests.

A BRILLIANT, though polemical, pamphlet by Eamonn McCann, which is just about to be published, has documented very well the performance of the British press over the Northern situation in the last two years. McCann shows deftly how irresponsible and frivolous the coverage has been—how, especially the *Mirror* and the *Mail*, back in 1969, patronisingly indulged Bernadette (whom they persistently referred to as young, vital, exciting and, God help us, swinging) and even mildly endorsed Civil Rights. Ah, but how quickly they changed! McCann ironically points up the different treatment given to the recent stories on the death of children—when a child was killed by an Army bullet she was "accidentally killed in crossfire"; when an infant was killed by, presumably, a Republican bullet, she was (splash treatment) murdered in cold blood, probably on purpose, by the I.R.A.

And of course Beattie and Cusack were armed, since the Army said so. Of course the deaf-mute was carrying a gun. I recall myself how the death of Harry Thornton was reported in both London evening papers on August 7. In the early editions, that Saturday, my own paper announced that the Army had shot down a "gunman" . . . "after he had opened fire" on the Springfield road. By mid-day, the "gunman" had been reduced to a mere terrorist who was thought to have fired a shot; by the last editions, he was a civilian and there was no mention of shots; only the sound of shots which may well have been the back-firing of a van. That weekend was a terrible one, and it was followed by internment. When I enquired why we had automatically labelled Harry Thornton a "gunman", I was informed that the story had come over the wire at 8.20 a.m. and the edition went at 8.30 a.m. There was no time to check. But the B.B.C. had been more careful. At no point did they accuse poor Harry Thornton of carrying a gun. Their reporters are obviously a little more reticent about accepting the unchecked statements of the British Army's press office.

I SUPPOSE YOU could say that a long-desired ambition of mine was achieved when I met Harold Wilson recently at a party. Ah, but, how are the mighty fallen! how the great undone! When I was a girl and the other girls had Paul Newman over their beds, I had Harold, so great was my dedication to the erstewhile leader. But alas, Harold turned out to be a weedy, rather pompous little man who was, I thought, very full of himself, and who scarcely took the slightest notice of me, apart from the most perfunctory how-do-you-do. When I tried to *engage him in conversation about Northern Ireland he merely referred me to his book.* The encounter was, I fear, the final blow, the ultimate rupture, between me and the British Labour Party. Later assurances that his memory is still as good as ever and that he had said afterwards to a colleague of mine: "Oh yes. I've just met your Mary Kenny. We talked about Ulster" were not even enough to make me retract. I'm joining International Socialists.

I HEAR THAT Liam Nolan, the celebrated radio personality, is to succeed me as Woman's Editor of the Irish Press. I must not be unkind about Liam because it would not be gracious and he has always been extremely kind and helpful to me. However, I am not sure that I altogether approve. First of all because he is a man (women's pages are cultural ghettos, products of the cultural apartheid which exists between the sexes; if we accept this, the least we must expect is that women run their own ghetto) and secondly because, with the unemployment situation as it is amongst journalists both here in London and in Ireland, I am not sure that it is correct for someone to hold down two regular fairly top jobs. A lot of very able young women applied for that job and I am sorry not to see one of them getting it. That said, however, within a certain context and considering the Irish Press's market, the choice of Liam is really quite a clever one. It seems to me to indicate that Tim Pat Coogan has now turned his back from steering the IP towards capturing that area of readers who are radical, political, sensible, intelligent, keen on hard news and sound features, and instead moving it towards a softer-centered audience. It doesn't seem like Tim, but then it may not be Tim who hired Liam. It may indicate the great preparation for the possible eventual merger between the daily and evening Presses — which we all hope *won't* take place. No one wants a newspaper to close. Anyway, I shall watch, rapt, from Fleet Street, Liam's coming performance as the Godfrey Winn of Ireland.

Mary Kenny is Features Editor of the London *Evening Standard*.

MICHAEL Mc KEOWN
In Belfast

ANYONE VIEWING the respective Press Conferences of the two Prime Ministers after the Chequers talks must have been struck by the contrast in the appearance of the two men. While the sad doey eyes of Jack Lynch were further sunken than usual and a great sense of weariness seemed to overwhelm him, Brian Faulkner was at his exuberant best. Not since the old days when as a mere Minister he persisted in upstaging his successive chiefs at Press Conferences, had he displayed so much command of a situation. In a reversal of accustomed roles he set out to put his interrogators at their ease, flashing his twisted smile in a mood of encouraging paternalism. The conference was shot through with the ebullience of a man who has come through twelve gruelling hours without offering one single hostage to fortune. And why begrudge him his moment of triumph. He was surely entitled to put the knife into David Bleakley for his manner of resignation, or to dismiss as irrelevant Ian Paisley and his friends, or to snarl at Fitt and Hume for their withdrawal from Stormont, or to regret the fact that Jack Lynch's freedom of action was limited by the minor inconvenience of the law of the land. Nor should he be blamed for suggesting that Jack and he were old buddies from way back in their old days in the respective departments of Commerce. Who knows ? They might be. No. Given the circumstances Brian Faulkner was entitled to his moment of triumph and it would be only the pedant who would cavil at the odd touch of poetic licence in the P.M.'s remarks.

Unfortunately however the Prime Minister *did not confine himself to the* legitimate political tactic of character assassination. Having proved to most people's satisfaction that he had not sold out on his political colleagues he promptly sold out on his political overlord, Reggie Maudling. In discussing the terms of his own consultative document and simultaneously dismissing the possibility of community government he made a nonsense of the Maudling talks and a fool of Reggie Maudling.

The consultative document which he intends to present to the depleted Commons when they reassemble in October apparently discusses the merits of Proportional Representation in elections and the possibility of an enlarged Senate. In other words the very issues which were indicated at the opening of Parliament back in June. It would appear that there has been no development in Faulkner's thinking despite the traumatic events which have intervened since then. Indeed some might say that there has been no development since the time eighteen months ago when Ian Paisley and William Beattie were elected to Stormont on a minority vote. Those cynics who hold that the abiding principle of the Unionist Party is a faithful dedication to the concept of one party rule had predicted at that point that before long the Unionists would be looking to P.R. to extricate them from the threat of an extremist takeover. The fact that the consultative document will now examine the case for P.R. says more about the Unionist reaction to Paisley than about the Unionist reaction to Maudling or Fitt.

The rigidity which appears to be enshrined in the consultative document was also obvious in Faulkner's rejection of a broadly-based government. He suggested that the concept of a community government was in conflict with the constitutional convention of "collective Cabinet responsibility." His position on this does not however square with either the constitutional or the historical reality. While Cabinet responsibility may be an essential feature of a sovereign government which is engaged in policy making decisions, it has little place in a subordinate government such as the N.I. Government where Ministers tend to be agents of their Westminster counterparts. Since the political situation over the past fifty years dictated that the N.I. Government should pursue a policy of parity the Government has been inhibited from exercising its devolved powers to pursue its own domestic policies. As a consequence the big spending departments such as Health and Education are spending moneys earmarked in Westminster and spending it in the manner stipulated by Westminster. There are few occasions when Stormont Cabinet Ministers have to exercise their own discretion.

Indeed the main area where autonomy was enjoyed and exercised in the past was in the field of security arrangements. It is unlikely that in the foreseeable future, no matter what form of government might emerge, that the N.I. Cabinet would have any discretion in the matter of security.

Apart from this administrative aspect of the problem, the recent history of N. Ireland does not support the necessity for cabinet responsibility. Since 1968 there has never been a united Cabinet in the North. On all the big issues which have arisen, individual Ministers have clearly voiced their own positions and remained quite happily within the Cabinet. Only when they were ready to overthrow a Prime Minister did any of them actually resign. Since August 9, David Bleakely remained for six weeks a member of a Cabinet which he later admitted he was in disagreement with. John Taylor is still a member of the Cabinet despite his publicly expressed reservations about security, while Harry West did not feel obliged to conceal his doubts about the wisdom of the Tripartite talks. Cabinet Responsibility in Northern Ireland is a rather sick joke.

However that issue is probably academic. The question of community government had significance only if it was to be the subject of discussions during the Maudling talks. These discussions have been going on for over a fortnight and Mr. Maudling has listened to groups like the N.I. Labour Party, the Alliance, the New Ulster Movement and the Ulster Liberal Party. These talks have, I am sure, been interesting and stimulating for those taking part in them. But sirn: not one of these groups can deliver anything but homilies they are irrelevant to the present situation. Mr. Maudling is not likely to attempt to foist, upon Mr. Faulkner reforms which would merely please a small handful of people who are anyway well behaved and therefore do not need to be conciliated. There is no bonus in that.

Reggie Maudling has a well merited reputation for being an indolent man not easily stirred to action. Even he however might possibly be piqued by the behaviour of a man who has landed him in the middle of a major political storm and then preempted his own political initiatives. Should he be stirred sufficiently he might pull the rug out from under Mr. Faulkner especially since in the emergence of the new loyalist party the nucleus of an alternative government is already present. That alternative offers Maudling an escape route from the spectre of direct rule which is probably more than the indolence of Mr. Maudling could sustain. The Paisley-Boal axis has already indicated its willingness to talk with the S.D.L.P.: an offer which the S.D.L.P. has rejected in case they might confer an element of credibility upon that grouping. Mr. Maudling might have no such scruples. Brian Faulkner might well come to regret the easy triumph of his best ever Press Conference.

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once imbalance in representation is shown by a Census; and that the 12 years is intended as an outer limit to be observed even in a relatively static population situation.

There remains, however, the shadow of the Courts and the real danger that a defeated candidate might take the issue there if he felt himself to be "gerrymandered" out of a seat by gross distortion of the representation ratio in his area.

For instance, if the South Dublin County constituency remains as it is through another election, and if Mr. Kevin Boland were to stand for his old seat and be narrowly defeated: then he could arguably ask the Courts to declare that the Constitutional requirements were not being met and that he was the victim of discrimination in that sense. His case in those circumstances might be that the revision shown to be necessary by the Census was not carried out in relation to that Constituency because it was known in advance that it would bring him back into the Dail. A hypothetical case, mainly, but a practical illustration of the sort of problem which could face a Government reluctant for tactical reasons to carry out a revision. And of course the present Government must be very reluctant. The new seats would go to the city areas, mainly to Dublin. and certainly well away from the old Fianna Fail strongholds of the West. Unless the "rearrangement" was extraordinarily skilful, the revision might have the net effect of giving Labour three or four more seats, or at least a couple of seats in the Dublin area.

On the other hand, the Government can hardly relish the constant taunts, if they dodge revision, that they're afraid to do it, as they were said to be afraid to face the electorate for the past year or more. The traditional Fianna Fail tactic would be to make a virtue out of necessity and try in other ways to offset inevitable damage in Dublin. One such way might be to do a nation-wide revision which would have the effect of "fire-proofing" sound party men—for instance Mr. Childers in Monaghan—and of dropping some "dissident" seats which are lost to the party one way or another. It should not be an impossible exercise to recast the whole Western area so that some seats, like Joe Lenehan's or Mick Moran's, would just disappear.

The present set-up in the Donegal-Leitrim-Sligo-North Roscommon area is pretty bad anyhow. Dr. Delap is as far from some of his constituents as they are from Dublin. Who would shed Government tears if in relieving this distortion, Letterkenny became something of an island and Neil T. Blaney fell short of his seat by a handful of votes ? It should be remembered that the present extraordinary shape of the constituencies in that area was carried out by a Government in which Mr. Blaney was a key Minister and a former and very influential Minister for Local Government. In a new revision now, he would have no voice and would not know what was proposed for Donegal until he read the schedule to the Bill like the rest of us. Similarly, the distortion in the Dublin county, Wicklow and adjoining areas is obvious, and unless party politics are laid aside (some hope !) we seem to be committed to revisions here after every Census. Could not a virtue be made out of this necessity too ? Could not a case be made for a more permanent revision carried out regardless of county boundaries, and once again who in the Government would cry if Paudge Brennan's seat got lost in the process ?

Similar considerations could readily come into play in the Galway-Clare-South Roscommon region where Dr. Bill Loughnane makes strange moves now and then.

Q. Why is the Dail being recalled a week early?

A. It could be said that the Government wants, as it stated, to allow time to discuss developments in the Northern crisis. And it could be that the Government is anxious to clear the desks of the Northen business so that it can get down to the pressing E.E.C. legislation. (The vital vote in the House of Commons will be coming a few days later). It could be that the Taoiseach will arrange a division on the debate to test anew the support, or courage, of the dissidents in the party. And it could also be that the Taoiseach is planning an election before Christmas and that the Dail will be dissolved very soon after it meets.

makes strange noises now and then.

Assuming a revision will be carried out on the basis of this Census, observers will watch the size of constituencies with special interest. Whatever else might be said about Kevin Boland as the Local Government Minister who carried out the last revision, he did good national service by increasing the number of three-seater constituencies. If we had all three-seaters, the potential for change of Government would certainly be more positive, and indeed Fianna Fail now faces its greatest threat from the three-seaters. It will be interesting to see if distortion of representation and territorial distribution of Dail seats will be used as an excuse to ease away from the three-seat principle and get back to the old clumsy four and five-seaters.

The more cynical political observers say if that is what it takes to keep Fianna Fail in power for another spell, it will be done; others still cling (weakly perhaps) to a lingering faith in basic morality in public life. Perhaps this is what will be on final trial when they come to look at the Census figures ?

The Press

"Off The Record"

ON THE NIGHT Joe Cahill of the Provisionals was released, the political correspondents of the Irish daily papers and R.T.E. were invited to a press briefing by the Government Information Bureau. The briefing was given by the Minister for Justice, Mr. Desmond O'Malley. The Minister told the correspondents that Mr. Cahill had been freed because there was no evidence to sustain a charge against him.

The Minister explained the Government's attitude to the I.R.A. and suggested that experience had proved how hard it was to get an Irish jury to convict a man on a criminal charge associated with political militancy. The Minister obviously regretted the fact, but it was a fact and had to be recognised. The Minister spoke in general terms of the militants' support and strength. And the correspondents thanked him for his help. They hoped such briefings might continue.

Next day, the *Irish Press*, *Irish Independent* and *Cork Examiner* and the news bulletins of R.T.E. carried reports of Mr. Cahill's release, including the information that there was insufficient evidence to sustain a charge against him. The reports spoke with obvious authority, clearly the correspondents were well informed. But none of them referred to the briefing and if "a source close to the Government" was quoted it was not suggested that the source was the Minister for Justice.

The Irish Times, however, carried a report of the briefing which made it quite clear that its reporter had been informed by an authoritative spokesman for the Government. The other correspondents and the Minister were dismayed. The correspondents felt the publication of a report which indicated that there had, indeed, been a briefing was, at least, an embarrassment all round and, at worst, a possible reason why Ministers might not be prepared to hand out information "not for attribution" in the future.

The briefing system in other countries is complicated—sometimes to the point of incomprehension. In Britain, for instance, there is a subtle distinction between a story which says "it is understood" and one which says "a source close to the Government explained . . ." And neither is quite the same thing as a revelation by "an official source." And you must then distinguish between "usually reliable sources," "reliable sources" and "sources"—which, by comparison with the other categories, must be assumed to be neither close to the heart of things nor reliable, if they exist at all anywhere outside of the press gallery.

The American system, certainly as it applies to the White House, is further entangled by the use of a pool of correspondents which carries information back to their colleagues with the aid of transcripts provided by press aides. The information may vary from hints at policy changes to the

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POINT OF VIEW

Hugh Munro

AFTER THE FIRST War, in 1919, John Bull, in his all-seeing wisdom, decided that P.R. would be a good thing for Paddy. The idea presumably was to try and ensure that Sinn Fein didn't form a self-perpetuating monolithic party rolling up gigantic majorities under the direct-vote system in whatever form of Home Rule Parliament would be devised; thereby stilling the voice of Unionists and in-betweeners of all kinds.

The fact that the Parliamentary Party from 1886 to 1910 and Sinn Fein in 1918, had never got less than two-thirds of the Irish seats at Westminster, could have given them the illusion that disciplined party unity, and not fratricidal strife, was and would remain the mark of Irish nationalist politics.

But there must also have been a element of trying it on the dog in the move. Britain had nearly gone over to P.R. during the war. In 1917 a Speaker's Conference had unanimously recommended it for the Commons. Prolonged debate followed. The Lords liked the idea, the Commons by a narrow margin didn't, and in the end it was dropped. But there was a lot of curiosity about how P.R. would work, and Ireland must have seemed a useful place to experiment with it.

But for whatever reason, Britain gave us P.R. and we have had it since; and after two lost referenda, it is hard to see any party offering to abandon it, or even change it—unless perhaps some accommodation with the North forces a constitutional revision.

We shape our institutions, and then our institutions shape us, someone said. It's not strictly true; we shape our institutions, and if they do not properly follow the contours of our needs, we have to accommodate to them. Making them accommodate to us is hard, for an institution is one of the most durable and inflexible of man's artifacts. A machine lasts ten or twenty years and offers no resistence to being modified or scrapped. But an organisation takes on a life of its own, and has prodigious powers of resistance to change. The Department of Agriculture is a classic example. Older than the State, it never lets the State forget it. The Spirit of its originator, Sir Horace Plunkett, still stalks its corridors, and despite the changes of 70 years, his Tory paternal protectionist do-gooder attitudes prevail in its counsels.

But organisations are not totally resistant to change, even if it takes a timescale of centuries to observe it properly. Take the British constitution for example. At one stage the barons collectively can dominate the King. Later the King dominates, being in effect his own executive; though the Lord Chancellor (now a technical if not a ceremonial post) can have important power. Then the Commons dominate over the King. We begin to hear of Ministers and in the end a Prime Minister, selected by the Commons, emerges. There has been change, if not always peaceful change; indeed it is probably fair to say that the important changes were brought about by violence or the threat of violence — Magna Carta, the Civil War, The Great Revolution, the Reform Bill of 1832. The people who man organisations are far too wedded to the status quo, for organisational change to be ever easy.

The people who built up the institutions of the State in 1922 were men working under pressure. It probably never occurred to them that the structure and rules of government which had been produced in Britain by centuries or working under the direct-vote system might not suit an Irish Free State operating under P.R. Understandably, seeing their haste to set up the state they took over the British way of running a Parliament, the British way of selecting an executive, the British way of changing a government, the British view of the relationship between prime minister and head of state—and combined this British structure with the new electoral system peculiar to Ireland, P.R. And Mr. De Valera, when adopting his new constitution, left all these British structures, and P.R. as well, unchanged. Again we can understand. He was concerned about forms, not about substance; about ending an allegiance on which no claims would be made, about replacing a passive King with a President. He could not afford to put significant new elements in his 1938 Constitution lest the people reject the whole thing.

So we in 1971 are left with a system of government which has no necessary unity about it. We have a structure of government which is the end-product of centuries of British experience under the direct-vote system, plus an electoral system which, if it obtained in Ireland for a similar time, would no doubt evolve a very different structure.

Evolution of the government structure will occur in the Republic, as it has occurred and is occurring in Britain. At the best of times, organisations being the unresponsive things they are, that evolution would be slow and often deferred till forced on by violence or the threat of it; and we have no reason to expect the best of times. We start with a structure and an electoral system neither of which came into existence in response to Irish needs and which are almost certainly mismatched. There are internal stresses in the whole set up, and before it can adapt itself to changing needs, it must first adapt itself to remove those stresses. But we should not hope that it will be quick about doing it.

Probably the first most-needed thing is to break the mental shackles of the past and realise that British example does not necessarily have to be followed. The Labour drive in 1968-9 to offer a new distinctive policy, to create a clear polarisation in Irish politics was offered to us as a forward-looking thing; but it was almost certainly a backward-looking thing, a harking back to the palmy days of Dizzy and the Grand Old Man, when every child was either born a little Liberal or else a little Conservative. Is it a coincidence that two of Labour's most apparently new recruits to the Dail in 1969 were trained historians, chroniclers of Victorian politics at Westminster? I think not.

(Continued from page 7.)

banal remarks of Richard Nixon to an inconsequential bystander who happens to talk at him. When he visited Ireland, the pool report on Nixon's encounters with housewives on the roadside included such details as the number of children in the women's families, the colour of their hair and the kind of clothes they were wearing.

In the Republic, which has fewer Government information officers than Stormont and a much more rigid approach to handing out news, briefings by Government Ministers are rare. The Taoiseach, Mr. Lynch, when he came to power, called the Dublin newspaper editors to a private conference at which he told them that he would prefer it if they didn't give so much publicity to extra-parliamentary protests groups, including the I.R.A. The editor of *The Irish Times*, Mr. Douglas Gageby, responded with a stinging editorial which, in effect, told Mr. Lynch: "You mind your shop and we'll mind ours." The request has not been repeated.

With increasing foreign interest in Irish affairs, the number of journalists arriving in Dublin hopeful that they might be included in "off-the-record" sessions with Mr. Lynch and his Ministers has increased. Most of them are astounded that no recognised briefing system exists in the Republic. At the same time, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. P. J. Hillery, has succeeded in setting up his own system, under which journalists regularly involved in Common Market affairs are frequently informed of the progress of negotiations. Dr. Hillery's advances, however, have not met with smiling approval by the Government Information Bureau which is under the wing of the Department of the Taoiseach.

Complaints about Government information services are common to journalists in almost all countries. In the Republic dissatisfaction is greater than in most other places. An adequate briefing system would help. But some journalists are afraid that it could be a two-edged weapon, with Ministers saying anything they have to say "off-the-record" and hoping that readers, listeners or viewers would not recognise the substance as a Ministerial attitude rather than a journalistic guess. These suspicions overcome, a briefing system properly operated in a vastly improved information service would go some way to bridging the gap between the Government and people.

Local Government

Bobby Molloy Runs Into Trouble

WAS THERE something symbolic in the fact that, when West of Ireland local authorities met in the Great Southern Hotel, Galway, to discuss his White Paper proposals with the Minister for Local Government, Bobby Molloy, the proceedings had to be transferred, because of the electricity strike, out of the artificially-lit hotel to the clear daylight of the local County Council offices. And in the hard cold light of the Galway day, Minister Molloy received one of the most united rejections yet of his hope of reorganising local government along the lines of the Government's White Paper.

It wasn't just that Fine Gael and other opposition elements attacked the proposals; strong attacks were made by such Fianna Fail stalwarts as Councillor Sean Calleary on behalf of Mayo County Council. Rejected completely was any consideration of the replacement of small local authorities by area councils, and the best the Minister could seize from the meeting, beneath a dressing of a professed willingness to examine the consensus of opinion gained in his regional round, was a recommendation asking him to refer the whole question of restructuring to a Commission of experts who would take evidence from individual bodies and to whom local authorities recommended for extinction, could make an appeal.

But then Bobby Molloy cannot have been too surprised if the Galway meeting echoed the stiffening resistance encountered by the proposals in other areas he has visited. Certain circumstances had operated in Western areas to make his repeat of the successful Childers tour on the Health Board proposals virtually impossible and unlikely even on his home ground, where he had the maximum influence to operate. As it was, the outgoing President of the Municipal Authorities Association, Matt Beckett, who attended the Galway meeting as representing Westport Urban Council, held his main fire for his presidential address to the association the following week. "The White Paper," said Mr. Beckett, "has outlined many of the faults in the existing local government system, but there is not a single reference to the one great fault, the necessity for reorganising the Department itself, where restrictive regulations, absurd delays and an unimaginative approach to pressing problems are continually causing frustration to councils and hardships to many of our citizens." This statement crystalises the single great fear of people with any experience in public life or community affairs—the development any further of a remotely controlled bureaucrati structure which would proliferate the bloats of red tape that now inhibit towns like Westport from controlling their own affairs and which would only place further barriers to dialogue between the policy-makers and the recipients.

Ironically, much of the blame for the failure of Bobby Molloy's goodwill tour with his White Paper can be laid at the door of Mr. Erskine Childers, Minister for Health, who successfully blarneyed local authorities into adopting his Health Board proposals, which transferred effective control of the local health services out of the hand of local councillors into boards, which are now seen as the happy hunting grounds for expense-breeding administrative jobs.

Mr. Childers made a most successful tour selling the McKinsey proposals, which involved restructuring health services along more rational lines, grouping various activities under respective programme managers and the whole operation being directed (on paper, at any rate) by a *Health Supremo* and a Regional Board to which various public and professional bodies have the right of representation. There is no better man than Mr. Childers to sprout impressive statistics and modern management jargon; it is doubtful, however, that, were he to make the same tour again in the light of practical experience of operation of his Regional Boards to date, he would receive such a personal success.

The week before Mr. Molloy called the local authorities in Connacht to the Galway meeting, local representatives on the Western Regional Health Board had publicly questioned the whole purpose of the boards following the spate of new appointments. Mayo County Councillor Padraic Flynn, of Castlebar, put it bluntly that he felt the poorer counties like Mayo could not afford the super service now being devised, with specialists at every hand's turn, but so far without any betterment of the operation at patient level. He questioned how much to date the new appointments made would cost the ratepayers of Mayo and anticipated public outrage when the rates' figures for Mayo, Galway and Roscommon became known. The medical profession joined in the fray with protests over the exclusion of medical men from administrative posts, and this was part of a general reaction to the near-monopoly of such posts being enjoyed by officials, many of whom simply transferred from local authority posts to better paid and more prestigious jobs in the new Hesalth Boards. And, naturally, every administrative appointment made had to be accompanied by secretarial facilities.

The full extent of the emasculation of local representation and the lack of power to cushion sensitive local rates against impositions from the Minister's boards, had just about begun to sink in when another

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Q. How have those ex-Ministers, stripped of all power in the dark of night, been making out financially?

A. Believe it or not — not too bad at all. Pensions alone paid to them in the past financial year were: C. J. Haughey £1,277. Neil T. Blaney £1,115. Caoimghin O Beolain got £1,125 and Michael Moran £1,286.

(Continued from page 3)

sell-out came along in the Molloy White Paper—and it proved just too much for suspicious local representatives already regretting the bureaucratic power structure they had foster-fathered in the Health Boards. Councils like Sligo County Council, already smarting under strong Ministerial hints to ban all development along nationally-designed arterial roads in their county or risk losing road development grants if they did not comply, could hardly be in a mood to welcome proposals for further centralised control of local affairs and the subjection of democratically-elected representation to Dublin bureaucracy.

Political loyalties are already balanced on a knife edge in some West of Ireland constituencies which will need redrawing when the new Census figures show a further population drop. The Minister is politician enough to understand when it is expedient to push and when it is expedient to draw back, and the Commission proposed by Councillor T. V. Lowther of Ballina, at least gives him a face-saving formula to temporise upon white hot White Paper proposals which members of his own party see as one more stage in the destruction of the democratic process to which Fianna Fail pays so much lip service.

Education

The Leaving Certificate Failures

OF THE 20,780 STUDENTS who sat the Leaving Cert this year, 4,016 failed. Of course, the word fail has been eliminated from the Department of Education terminology in connection with its examinations and the expression "not entitled to certificates" substituted, but for the 4,016 so described the blunt fact is that they have failed the Leaving. The change in terminology does not soften the blow: one in five of all those who did the examination has no certificate to show for five or six years' endeavour. This means that a variety of opportunity is denied to them and they—and their parents—are wondering what went wrong and what they will do now.

What went wrong in the case of most of them is, perhaps, that they should never have taken a Leaving Cert course in the first place. Their aptitudes do not lie in the field of speculative studies. Irish, English, Latin, French, Maths or Physics may be tolerable up to Inter Cert level, but when the going gets really tough—and it has become that now in the Leaving course—they are beaten from the start. A look at any Leaving Cert paper for 1971 will show that the standard required for even the Lower Course was quite demanding. Not that the examination as a whole should be faulted for that: a terminal examination of this kind must be of substantial standard if its associated certificate is to be of any real value.

The real need is for guidance. If a professional guidance service were available for school-goers a lot of the personal tragedy could be avoided. Slowly, the Department of Education and the schools are wakening up to this fact, but so far the only educational body in the country that offers a regular guidance service by professional educational psychologists is the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee. The Department of Education has in recent years employed a small corps of educational psychologists, but these are too centralised and too few to provide the individual kind of service needed. What is needed is that each pupil at Inter Cert stage, and preferably before it as well, should be given an aptitude test and advised as to the kind of educational course best suited to him. In the limited degree to which that is already done, a lot of agony has been prevented. One must be compelled to conclude that the 4,000 Leaving Cert fatalities, plus the even greater number who have got Leaving Certs of little material value, would not be in the distressful position in which they now find themselves. They are too old to begin apprenticeship to a trade, not qualified for university, college of technology, teacher-training college or the civil service and many have not the required subjects for the new regional technical colleges. If they could claim that they have achieved a personal intellectual fulfilment some compensation might be forthcoming, but the sad fact is that for two years or more they have been passive resisters to a confrontation with schools subjects that for them grew more and more meaningless and distasteful. When they look back it will be more in sorrow than satisfaction. Looking forward, many of them will see only the emigrant ship and the anonymity of London where they can work as navvies, or, with luck, as bus conductors.

Not that vocational guidance is the whole answer. Where in the few places it is available it is tragically true that at times the counsel given is ignored. The fond parent (one remembers that the adjective was once synonymous with foolish) simply refuses to believe what she does not want to believe. Tell a middle class mother that her son would have a better chance of becoming a good, and happy, carpenter than of entering medical school, where he would most likely fail in first year anyway, and you will be courting insult.

Among the saddest coterie of the Leaving Cert failures are those who do not make the grade in Irish. A candidate can get A grades in any number of subjects but an E grade in Irish will deny him a certificate. Why this annual insult to our national language? Identifying it with a kind of tyranny that is the more abnoxious because it is subtle does nothing to achieve the first aim of its revival, i.e. to create a love and respect for it. This is one area in which, even less than in others (after all some kind of consultation *did* take place in connection with the community schools project) are parents consulted. But if the present language policy is to be maintained, even at this price, by the method now in use, at least no one could allege that this policy would be ostensibly altered if candidates were awarded a certificate in respect of each subject they pass. In this way the department could really help to eliminate or alleviate the dismay of failure where there has been an otherwise creditabe performance.

Q. Whatever became of the Dail Committee of Public Accounts Enquiry into the famous £100,000.

A. Nothing very much really. They've been enjoying a well-earned vacation and plan to resume their proceedings after the Dail reconvenes — unless Joe Dowling throws a spanner in the works that is.

The Church

Celibacy and The Synod

THE POINT HAS often been made that Pope Paul VI is quite prepared to allow free discussion in the Church on two conditions —that he reserve the right to limit the area of discussoin, and that the discussion produce the concrete decision which he himself has already reached. This appeared to be the position about clerical celibacy as the Synod of Bishops opened in St. Peter's on the last day of September, significantly the feast of St. Jerome, fanatical defender of celibacy, and enemy of sex, lawful or otherwise.

Paul has left little doubt about his own position on the question of clerical celibacy. Open discussion of the subject had hardly got under way when his encyclical *Priestly Celibacy* (1967) declared it "unthinkable" that the Church should consider changing a discipline which she had followed for so many centuries. When the Dutch, within

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Diary of the Year

Wednesday, September 22: The Fianna Fail Parliamentary Party discusses the Government's Northern Ireland policy for more than five hours. The General Synod of the Church of Ireland rejects a Bill to suspend the election of Bishops until legislation is enacted to distribute episcopal responsibilities more equitably.

Thursday, September 23: Two people are killed in an explosion in the Falls area of Belfast. It is announced that tourist earnings for 1970 have fallen short of the projected target by £2.1m.

Friday, September 24: The Stormont M.P. for Woodvale, Mr. John McQuade, who resigned from the Unionist Party last week in his election to the Shankill Ward of Belfast Corporation.

Saturday, September 25: Representatives of the three parties in the Dail join members of the S.D.L.P. in addressing an anti-internment rally at the Natiotnal Stadium in Dublin. Mr. Tomas MacGiolla, President of Sinn Fein (Gardiner Place) attacks the policies of the S.D.L.P. at a meeting outside the G.P.O.

Sunday, September 26: The Taoiseach, Mr. Lynch, before leaving for the tripartite talks at Chequers says that one of the most important tasks of the talks was to ensure that Northern Ireland Opposition M.P.s take part in future discussions A few days before his six-month term of office as Stormont Minister of Community Relations is due to end Mr. David Bleakley resigns from Mr. Brian Faulkner's Government over internment and other policies. At Croke Park Offaly win their first All-Ireland Football title ever by beating Galway by three points.

Monday, September 27: The three Prime Ministers involved in the Anglo-Irish tripartite talks meet for more than six hours at Chequers.

Tuesday, September 28: The two-day tripartite talks at Chequers end and it becomes clear that, despite the hopeful terms of the official communique, no concrete proposals have been arrived at. Raiders get away with £19,000 in cash and some registered letters, in three raids in the North.

Wednesday, September 29: Two people are killed and twenty-five injured when a bomb wrecks a public house on the Protestant Shankill Road in Belfast. The Government decides to recall the Dail on October 20th, one week earlier than scheduled, to discuss the North.

Thursday, September 30: Protestants and Catholics clash in a number of incidents in Belfast following the pub blast on the Shankill Road.

Friday, October 1: The Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, Mr. Gerard Collins, invokes Section 31 of the Broadcasting Authority Act, 1960, for the first time and thereby prevents the R.T.E. Authority from reporting on activities associated with illegal organisations. About 200 Gardai meet in Dublin to protest against the sacking of three members of the force and decide to meet again next Tuesday to consider strike action.

Saturday, October 2: A man is killed when a bomb explodes in front of the Rural Council offices at Lisburn. About 20,000 people, most of them Orangemen, march in the funeral of the two men killed in the Shankill pub explosion.

Sunday, October 3: Sean O Riada, the composer and musician, dies in London. In the North explosions and shootings continue and in Derry a five-year-old girl is critically wounded with gunshot wounds after British troops fire at the car in which she was travelling.

Monday, October 4: A British soldier is killed by an explosion in the Falls road area of Belfast.

Tuesday, October 5: It is announced that Mr. John Hume, M.P., is to be the first president of the alternative assembly which the Stormont Opposition is to set up. The threatened strike by gardai is averted when an adjournment of a month is accepted at a meeting in Dublin of up to 2,000 members of the force.

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three years of the encyclical, had reached the decision that a change of discipline was not only thinkable but desirable, Pope Paul made it quite clear that if a change ever came in the law of compulsory clerical celibacy it would not be in his own lifetime. And while the appropriate arm of the Curia became progressively more liberal in handing out dispensations to priests asking for them, the Pope's reference to the departure of priests as a continuation of the treason of Judas showed his deep personal feelings in the matter.

Officially there were two items on the agenda for the Synod—priestly life, and social justice in the world. While Pope Paul has shown himself reasonably progressive on social issues, it is unlikely that any dramatic results will come from synodal discussion of the topic. In fact it may well be on the agenda only as a diversionary tactic. The great issue of the meeting is undoubtedly the crisis in the priesthood.

Vatican sources have been vocal in accepting that clerical celibacy is possible as a subject for debate. With a man like Cardinal Suenens present, there would be little likelihood of the topic being passed over in silence. But curial plans for limitation of the area of discussion, and for ensuring the emergence of a "right" decision on the area to be discussed, are already fairly clear at the time of writing, and further evidence on these headings may well be available after the opening sessions.

In his fiery letter to the Dutch Hierarchy in December, 1969, Pope Paul brusequely told the bishops that "the best service you can render to your priests and to your faithful will be to affirm serenely your total and unreserved accord with the Universal Church on the points contested." Despite the feeling of "Roma locuta est," however, there were indications that a situation could be foreseen in which the Church might ordain married men of mature years while holding absolutely to the rule of clerical celibacy as at present enforced. Rumours abound in Rome at the moment that this may well be the line taken at the Synod—that the Pope will authorise national Bishops' Conferences to take such a decision wherever there is an absolute shortage of priests.

In this way the area of discussion is being clearly mapped out. The Bishops will be allowed to discuss the eventual ordination of married men; they will be thoroughly discouraged from discussing the general question of compulsory celibacy. To ensure that this will be the case, a massive collection of background material in favour of retaining the present law of celibacy has been sent out in the past month to the bishops of the world. It is reported that the Pope himself requested the secretariate of the Synod to prepare the document—thus ensuring that if any move is made by the liberal lobby, there will be ample documentation on hand to refute their arguments In his recent speeches Pope Paul has expressed the hope that the Synod would help to dispel "strange and abhorrent ideas which unhappily are circulating about the priesthood," and while he did not refer directly to the celibacy issue, he prayed that the bishops would come out in support of the priesthood in its "right direction."

Theology has not yet clarified the status of the Synod of Bishops. The debates going on these days in St. Peter's may decide once and for all whether the Synod is to be merely a rubber-stamp of papal and curial decisions, or whether it is to develop into a structure expressive of collegiality, that key-concept of Vatican II which appears in recent times to have been lost, stolen or strayed.

Courtesy of Private Eye

Wexford

The Political Line-Up

IF A MAN called Doran or Nolan told a Wexfordman called Prendergast or Devereux that he was not an Irishman the result would not be a firmly issued bang in the mouth because the statement would be incomprehensible. There is in County Wexford a greater amalgam of blood than anywhere else in Ireland and the now totally slotted jig saw of Danish, Flemish, Welsh, Norman French and Gaelic races cries black farce upon the contending Gaelic tribes of the North. This sanctimonious complacency is not without justification for fusion has occurred in Wexford even in totally colonised baronies like Forth and Bargy whose racial background was so foreign that up to the last century a Teutonic-sounding dialect was the everyday language of the people. Today there is no conscious difference although the people of the two baronies referred to generally marry among themselves.

Is there any lesson at all in today's horrifying strife from this vigorous south east corner of Ireland so remote from the battlefield that it might just as well be Czechoslovakia ? If there is a lesson it is one of patience, it is a lesson which demonstrates that in the long run and it will be long, the inexorable grind of time will melt the barriers so thoroughly that one day a new generation will wake up and shake their heads with bemused indifference at the cancer of hate which rotted its father's guts.

Wexford is fiercely Irish Nationalist, but there are different and conflicting viewpoints on the methods to achieve the ultimate Valhalla, a thirty-two county sovereign State with all the children of the nation, etc., etc., etc. Is Jack Lynch a more shrewd and calculating Fenian than the pike blacksmiths? *That is the question that only* history can answer. *It is the question that* exercises the mind in this long minced mini Switzerland. 80% of the Soldiers of Destiny back Jack. The intriguing problem is who the potentially dissenting 20% are. Their left hand gives no indication to their right. "Too cute" thinks Wexford's Mayor, Kevin Morris, of a suspect. The town in which Paudge Brennan and Neil Blaney had audience with Wexford's Joe Groome, Frank Cullimore, before the power struggle erupted does not answer. Nor does the county at large. Wexford constituency is no longer served at executive level as it was in Jim Ryan's halycon days. The two Fianna Fail members are Lorcan Allen and Sean Browne. Between Lorcan Allen's name and the abreviation T.D. there is a large question mark in invisible ink. His enthusiasm for the Taoiseach has not produced either airport or froth-at-the-mouth symptoms. This, however, may be due more to being passed over at table during dessert than any sensitive appreciation of a policy shift. Sean Browne is an honest hard-working precinct T.D. who has seen The Chief impose hands. And that is enough.

The opposition in the four-member constituency is formidably armed with vote dredgers. Brendan Corish is the gritty son of an unforgettably brilliant father who put iron into the veins of the working class. Agreeable but showing the presiding rather than the ruling aspect over Labour's factions he is nevertheless a man who could inflict severe damage on the Fianna Fail machine even without bringing in another Labour candidate. There is no clear Labour second runner moving zealous tracks around the constituency. Herein lies their weakness.

Q. Will Aontacht Eireann be registered as a political party in time for the next general election?

A. Not unless Kevin Boland steps on the gas. His first application has met with requests for full details of membership, annual meetings held, and other requirements. Sinn Fein's application was approved within a week.

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The same cannot be said for Fine Gael for here at last they have a man with the maximum chance for the second ticket, Ald. Jim Jenkins, a former mayor of Wexford town, a graduate of Trinity College. A popular tireless businessman, he is of undoubted Cabinet potential. (A factor which enemies say cost him the nomination the last time.) Fine Gael's T.D. is tailor made for the party in John Redmond's homeland for the incense of respectability with nobility wafts around the person of Sir Anthony Esmonde. His title does not pain because it is not British. His family record is politically impeccable and kinsmen can be found, and are oft quoted, from strife in 1641 or 1798, long before the other crowd were ever heard of. Great stuff this.

In Fine Gael therefore is contained the greatest menace to the status quo in a once safe for Dev. constituency. The fascinating collective animal, the electorate, will decide if horrified or bored or disillusioned with the present Cabinet that a shift to Fine Gael would punish adequately. The floating vote will not go to Labour.

What about the rest then? As in every county in Ireland there is now the Green Republicans and the Red Republicans. Council and Corporation members they may both become but of becoming members of Dail Eireann in 1972 there is not the remotest chance. The greens are traditionals; the reds are reds and gleefully adept at confusion. Both their vigorous mutual hatreds demonstrate their long vision as clearly as it demonstrates the tenacity of the radical Marxist in any embryonic movement of potential.

What of Kevin's men? At once it can be said they are non-starters from the October 1971 vantage point. Although be it said one of the fistfull who travelled up was one of the brightest agricultural graduates in the country.

Women's Lib.

After Mary Kenny

IT LOOKED AT LONG LAST that, after a few false starts, the Women's Liberation movement may be on a sound basis.

Their silence during the past few months could have two meanings: either the movement has died a slow death following the exit to London of its inspirational head, Mary Kenny, or it has been busy reforming, and healing its various wounds.

The movement held a little heralded seminar in the North Star Hotel, Dublin, last week, and the subdued tone of the proceedings would seem to indicate that most of the devotees of Liberation realised that their previous activities had done little for the cause.

It is an open secret that there has been a serious division of opinion within the ranks of the liberationalists: one group, headed by various media orientated young women such as Miss Kenny and Nell McCafferty, felt that the movement should become politically involved and orientated, and that any protest by any movement should be adopted as their own, providing it furthered their liberation cause.

The other opinion, regarded as more moderate, because its devotees had no apparent political affiliations, felt that the movement should follow its own precepts, and consider its own ways and means. "Why should liberation be banner carriers for other organisations, however worthy" and "Why should liberation follow on the coattails of other protests" were the thinking of this group.

It would seem that the ill-fated "Contraceptive express" was the watershed of the two facets of opinion. When the Irish Women's Liberation Movement made a concerted attack on the contraception laws in the Republic of Ireland, there was a serious division of opinion in the ranks.

Legislation of contraception is the sixth of the six precepts of the movement in Ireland, but many members dedicated to reform of this particular law reform were, in their own words "turned off" by what they considered the slightly ridiculous spectacle presented by the members at the barrier of Heuston Station, each swallowing a contraceptive pill when challenged by Customs officers.

With the re-forming and re-assesment of the movement, it begins to look as though any protests will be practically based. The movement has now accepted the idea of workshops, an idea which has come from over the water. Members would take up the precept which appealed most to them, and form workshops to deal with that particular precept.

The idea evolved at last week's seminar, largely as a result of the speech made by a London Liberationist, May Hobbs, who has been responsible for unionising most of the night cleaners of London.

Attending the Dublin meeting as a guest of Nell McCafferty, May Hobbs made an impassioned, sensible, and humourous speech. She herself is a member of the Socialist Women, but her liberation activities are limited to trade union work.

"It's all a matter of working quietly," she told the Dublin meeting. "Get the women in, particularly the working class women. Most of them won't go for things like abortion and contraception. They think it's against God and all that toffee. So you get them into workshops on things they can agree with, like equal pay. Then you can start working on them for the other things."

Her words, however, did indicate that Ireland's attitudes are still impractical when it comes to involving women. Most of the members of the Irish movement hold hard to the idea that members joining the movement must subscribe to all six principles. An indication, indeed, that the movement is what Mrs. Hobbs claimed it to be: bourgeois orientated. In London, the thousand night cleaners who have joined her banner had little to lose; to the Irish members, most of whom are mid ile class, polemics have an appeal that night strikes have not.

And there is still the feeling that liberation means the Irishwomen's Liberation Movement banner: You must take liberation to mean what we say it to be.

One member put it: It's amazing, you say to a woman, would you like to come to a woman's liberation meeting, and they say they have enough liberation. And they might have five kids."

Automatically, one presumes, a woman who has chosen to have five children is excluded from "liberation," unless she bitterly resents her circumstances.

Despite the growing pains, however, the basic determination to stop shouting, and do something, may mean that the cause of liberation of women may advance . . . . whatever about the cause of the Irish Women's Liberation Movement.

Q. What was the origin of the Government ban on I.R.A. appearances on RTE?

A. "I was informed by the Minister for Justice last Friday afternoon that members of an illegal organisation had been invited to take part on Sunday, the 20th June, in RTE's Radio news programme which would deal with the activities of that organisation and that an invitation was extended also to a member of the Government to take part. RTE were told that a member of the Government would not take part and, because it was my view that it was not in the public interest that members of an illegal organisation should be permitted to use such a programme for publicising their activities, I requested the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs to convey this view to the RTE authorities."

An Taoiseach, Dail Eireann. June 24, 1971.

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The first Irish delegation to London, July, 1921. From left to right: R. C. Barton, Eamon de Valera, Count Plunkett, Arthur Griffith and Erskine Childers.

THE QUEST FOR PEACE

LEON O BROIN discusses a revealing new account of the Anglo-Irish Treaty talk

WHITEHALL DIARY, VOL. III: By Thomas Jones, edited by Keith Middlemas: Oxford University Press. £4.75 net.

It is easy to agree with Dr. Nicholas Mansergh, who supplies a foreword to the third volume of Thomas Jones's Diary that no work of comparable interest or equal authority on the shaping of Anglo-Irish relations has appeared for a generation, and that it stands alone in describing policies in the making when their outcome was all unknown. It is, to quote Mansergh again, a unique contibution to history.

The Diary ranges over the course of events from 1918 to 1925, and deals particularly, often in the closest detail, with the negotiations that led first to the Anglo-Irish Truce, then the Treaty settlement, and finally the compromise in 1925 over the Boundary Commission debacle. It presents the British side of these happenings substantially, and it is, of course, an account compiled by a man who stood in a very special relationship with David Lloyd George, who, as Prime Minister in a coalition government, led a desperate but exceptionally talented and influential team. Jones was Welsh, and could talk to Lloyd George in Welsh whenever it suited them to do so, but he was no mere secretary, no mere recorder of what he saw and heard, no mere passer-on of information. He was right in the middle of things as an active negotiator, the taker of initiatives, the producer of ideas and the stopper-up of breaches whenever these threatened, and they frequently did. It would be fair to say openly now, what was then said behind the scenes, that to him to a considerable degree, the Treaty was due.

Jones brought to the complex problems of Anglo-Irish relations a first-hand acquaintance with Ireland acquired as a Barrington lecturer and through a professorship of economics he had held for a year at Queen's University, Belfast. More importantly he brought sympathy to the solution of these problems, as did Curtis, Cope and Anderson, his Civil Service collaborators at Westminster and in Dublin Castle. All of them genuinely desired to see the Irish Question settled satisfactorily. The able editor of the Diary describes Alfred Cope as working towards that end beyond the normal course of duty. The same could be said with equal truth of Thomas Jones.

There are many aspects of the Diary that one would like to talk about. I can only mention a fundamental few. In their pre-Truce discussions it is very striking how ill-informed the British Cabinet were concerning the attitudes of the Irish leaders. De Valera was believed to be a moderate who would do business with them if he were not prevented by extremists like Collins. The channels of information and communication were manifestly undependable. The Chief Secretary, Hamar Greenwood, who incidentally emerges as a more sympathetic character than appeared from the Irish propaganda of the period, told his colleagues that he could not rely on the Dublin police, the Post Office or the Civil Service, and we know that the Secret Service was at the same time undergoing a process of elimination. As often as not ministers like Arthur Balfour, who had served in Ireland, were still seeing that country as they had done thirty or forty years before. They fluctuated in traditional fashion between moods of conciliation and repression. Churchill most consistently favoured taking a strong line and got a laugh from the Cabinet by saying that he would pay up to £5,000 for a hanging case, and proportionately for others. He was notably intransigent during the difficult months following the Treaty, but in the 1925 discussions he tilted the balance in the Cabinet towards the Irish with much skill. He must have been a heartbreak at times for Lloyd George who found him disloyal, unreliable in a crisis, and suffering perhaps from a strain of lunacy. With the other members of his negotiating team the Prime Minister had no such trouble. They all had their political positions to maintain, and yet they co-operated with their Liberal leader in a remarkable degree. One finds in the Diary remarks such as "He [Lloyd George] spoke in the most superlative terms of the stand that F. E. [Birkenhead] was making. As for [Austen] Chamberlain, he would, of course, go straight even at the risk of wrecking his political career." By comparison the Irish negotiators were a divided company from the beginning.

One is not surprised to find Lloyd George coming extremely well out of a diary written by his "good genius," but it must be acknowledged that, as Jones tells the story as it unfolds before his eyes, he deserves to do so. He had an enormously difficult hand to play and played it with a verve that won the diarist's admiration. "Throughout the Irish negotiations he was magnificent" and displayed "all his great qualities at their best." Jones mentions especially the Prime Minister's patience and alertness, and his untiring willingness to re-explore intractable areas. But there were occasions when Lloyd George, exasperated, threatened to stand up to the irreconcilable "worms" among Government supporters and even to resign in the face of Craig's obduracy over Ulster. He repeatedly said that he would be no party to coercing the South.

What impression did the Irishmen make on the British? For a while the Cabinet were dependent on reports. Smuts told them that they were all small men, rather like sporadic leaders thrown up by a labour strike. Griffith appeared to be a realist, but de Valera spoke like a visionary. Lord Midleton, the leader of the Southern Irish Unionists, regarded de Valera as an uncompromising fanatic. But when Lloyd George met de Valera he formed the opinion that while he was not a big man, he was sincere, and an agreeable personality. He had a limited vocabulary, talked chiefly of ideals and constantly recurred to the same few dominating notions. The Irish plenipotentiaries, on coming to London, impressed Lloyd George. He thought they were simple men, with none of the skill of the old nationalists. By June, 1922, he was regretting the fewness and weakness of the Irish leaders. There was only Griffith. Collins was "just a wild animal—a mustang."

Griffith is seen by Jones as a man with his emotions normally well under control. When Collins heard of an impending break in the negotiations because of the recalcitrance of the Ulstermen, he was obviously very much upset at the news, but it was much harder to tell what Griffith felt about anything. He just said that the Prime Minister should stand up to Craig and call his bluff. Things were different when Jones saw Griffith at midnight on the 5th December, the day before the Treaty was signed. "He was then labouring under a deep sense of the crisis and spoke throughout with the greatest earnestness and unusual emotion. One was bound to feel that to break with him would be infinitely tragic! He and Collins had been completely won over, Griffith said, to belief in Lloyd George's desire for peace and recognised that he had gone far in his efforts to secure it. This belief was not shared by their colleagues at home. There was still much distrust and fear that if the Treaty were signed they would be "sold." They were told they had surrendered much ("the King" and "association") and got nothing to offer the Dail in return. They appealed to Lloyd George to get from Craig a conditional recognition, however shadowy, of Irish national unity if the South accepted the Commonwealth. The sequel—what happened finally to a confrontation that began on one side with a demand for something less than a Republic and, on the other, with a willingness to concede something less than Dominion Home Rule—is history. What the book contributes to an understanding of that confrontation and related topics is bound to give new life to an old and painful debate.

Dr. Leon O Broin's study of Fenianism, "Fenian Fever: An Anglo - American Dilemma," was published recently by Chatto and Windus.

Hibernia Review of Books

PUBLISHING IN IRELAND

During the past decade publishing in Ireland has undergone some significant and large changes and, though still relatively small, has become a fast expanding industry. On the occasion of the Irish Book Publishers' Association's participation in the International Book Fair at Frankfurt this month, 'Hibernia Review of Books's devotes itself to a 'Publishing in Ireland' survey. First DENIS DEVLIN of Gill and Macmillan, discusses the general problems and trends of the industry.

PUBLISHING has in the past been referred to as a cottage industry and in many ways this is true—and possibly truer of Irish publishing than of British or European publishing.

There are two major problems facing the Irish publishing industry in its attempt to grow and develop: (1) the small size of the home market, and (2) to export books successfully calls for a considerable investment in marketing skills and money.

With the exception of educational books, a substantial portion of the market in Ireland is catered for by English-published books. Only in the last few years have Irish publishers re-emerged who can seriously challenge U.K.-based publishers for a share of this growing market, and the evidence suggests that they are meeting with success. While traditionally British publishers have regarded Ireland as part of their home market, the scale of the industry here requires a different perspective. Nevertheless, to expand, the industry must be able to tackle not only the British, but other markets as well. In my own company over two-thirds of our non-text books are sold outside Ireland and the U.K. is, in fact, more important than the domestic market.

One of the biggest advantages publishers in Ireland have is that they publish in English, still the world's number one language. The experience of the British publishing industry—though not directly comparable—does at least point the way for us. In 1970 British publishers exported about 45% of their output, mainly to English-speaking markets.

Secondly, even in the past few years on the home market there has been a growth in the demand for quality Irish material. This market has been developed by Irish publishers who should be able to, and do, give better service than outside publishers. It is noteworthy that over the past few years more and more Irish authors are being published in Ireland, rather than in London or elsewhere. This is due partly to the fact that some Irish publishers can offer a service to authors at least as good as that offered by non-Irish publishers, and not only at home, but in the U.K. and elsewhere.

There are many problems facing Irish publishers in their task of exporting. They must ensure that booksellers are aware of, and stock, their titles. This is no small job, since the publisher is faced with the task of covering many relatively small accounts spread over a wide area. It is unlikely that any Irish publisher could afford to do this alone; most solve the problem by associating with another publisher or distributor, or by arranging for an agency to carry their books.

Many booksellers outside Ireland are a little scared of subscribing (i.e., placing orders before publication) books that relate to Ireland. They need some convincing that many titles, such as those published in Ireland, can be sold if offered to the public. And there is also the problem, at least in the U.K., of booksellers reluctant to stock books without a London imprint. While these are small problems, they do illustrate the amount of convincing that must be done at a trade level before books with a Dublin imprint will be accepted. It also demonstrates the real necessity for publishers to promote their books vigorously abroad so that booksellers will feel more confident in stocking them.

This is really the heart of the matter—how does an Irish publisher get to the people who will buy and read his books? The answer to this will depend to a large extent on the type of books published. It is possible to forecast and research the market for school books or books aimed at the academic market; but with general books, this is not the case. In many ways the general book market could be described as the 'fashion' one. We often see the case of a book published on a topic; half a dozen or more books on the same subject being offered by other publishers. Similarly, a name can sell a book. While a first novel by an unknown writer will be lucky to sell 2,500 copies, a new Alistair Maclean novel could have a printing of anything of up to 100,000 copies in a hard-bound edition. Even in more specialised markets (e.g., the religious market) this is so. On the other hand, there are scores of new books published every year which fail even before they see the bookstores. One of the real problems facing bookseller and publisher alike is the lack of research into book buying preferences. This, to a large extent, is due to the sheer quantity of books published each year (in Britain alone in 1970 over 30,000 titles were published). Since each one of these can be described as a different product, it is easy to see why it is cheaper in many cases to actually publish the book than to research the market in detail beforehand.

On the other hand, when it comes to school books, much more can be done about research and testing before publication. If a publisher has a new title or series aimed at a particular market, he can normally lessen the risk by doing a pilot run in a selected area or number of schools to test both teacher reaction to the books and how they work out in the classroom. To some extent—at least in post-primary — Irish publishers are cushioned from severe outside competition by syllabus requirements which often differ from those obtaining elsewhere. By catering for this market, Irish publishers may effectively cut themselves off from selling their books outside the country, but this is not always the case. For example, the history series which we recently published would seem to fit curriculum requirements in places as far apart as Australia and Rhodesia. Similarly, with academic books, it is obviously much easier to identify and assess markets for particular works. This is also true of other specialised markets, such as the numismatic market. The task is simpler, since, in addition to defining the market, it is easier to assess the competition. The identification of needs of particular groups has led to the development of 'series' publishing: this is where a number of books on related subjects aimed at the same market is produced, thus reducing the costs of promoting and selling any one title.

One of Louis le Brocquy's brush drawings included in the Dolmen Press's very successful The Táin, Thomas Kinsella's translation of the Irish epic Táin Bo Cuailgne

The aim of a publisher's marketing efforts is to make sure that as many copies of a book are sold in as many markets as possible. He must win the support of the book trade in a number of countries, as a very high proportion of books sold are channelled through trade outlets. He must also ensure that the ultimate customer will want to buy his books. The promotion of a book will, of course, depend largely on the kind of book it is.

In the case of *school books*, whether in Ireland or elsewhere, the publisher tries to convince the teacher that a book is one to be used either as a classroom text or as a project book for a course. In this area, hard selling can be counter-productive, and the publisher's main effort is directed to persuading the teacher to read the book. For this reason, most publishers offer either a specimen copy service, under which teachers can request a copy of the book from the publishers, and either buy it or return it after a specified period.

With *academic books* the publisher's aim is to have his books adopted as texts by lecturers, or included on recommended reading lists. He must ensure that his books are stocked in academic bookstores and will be given the best possible display. If a book is recommended, it will be bought by university, college or seminary libraries; but the publisher will also hope that students will buy. Information on books is usually disseminated to academics and others through specialised mailing services. Most publishers will have representatives visiting universities to discuss their books with teachers. Reviews in the relevant journals are also quite important.

It is, of course, the *general book* (fiction, biography, travel, etc.) market that is the most difficult and the one where the biggest successes and greatest failures occur. Fashion can play an important part, either in terms of a subject of the popularity of an author. The range open to the publisher is limitless. For this kind of book a publisher will depend on getting good display space at the bookstore and will back this up with point-of-sale material, dump bins, etc., for important titles. He will also depend to some extent on library sales (which account for over 10% of total purchases in the U.K.). A publisher will hope to have the book reviewed, but generally speaking does not spend too much money on advertising in the newspapers and other media. A publisher also tries to see that his author will get publicity in the media through interviews, diary pieces and other news items. Irish publishers wishing to promote their books must involve themselves increasingly in this type of activity.

The service both bookseller and publisher give to the book buyer is an important element in the success of a book. With so many titles being published, it is, of course, impossible that many, let alone all, booksellers will stock every book published. Very little research has been carried out into book-buying patterns; but some work carried out by Dr. Mann of Sheffield University suggests that there is an element of impulse buying in bookstores. His figure is between 10% and 16% of people visiting bookstores. However, Dr. Mann also discovered that nearly half the people he interviewed who would hope to buy a book found that the particular book was not in stock, and of these only 16% had actually left an order for the book. 84% had not taken any immediate steps towards securing a book. These figures, while rather slim evidence, do underline the importance for publishers to have their books stocked by booksellers. In other words, not alone is it vital they should get to the ultimate user of the book, but they also must make sure that when the customer looks for the book in a store it is there.

The mechanical business of ordering, invoicing, despatching and delivering a particular title to a bookshop is one area where the whole publishing industry is not particularly strong. This is partly the result of the number of different products—over a quarter of a million titles in print. In Britain the Booksellers' Association keeps track of deliveries, and based on their figures it would seem that Irish publishers compare favourably with their English counterparts.

This is an important source of revenue for Irish publishers. It includes the sales of American or translation rights to other publishers, and also the sale of the right to serialise and broadcast on radio and television. Many titles would not be economical were it not for the fact that the Irish publisher can arrange for an American publisher to take an edition of the book and arrange for simultaneous production of both editions. Apart from being a valuable export outlet, this can make the Irish publisher's edition more competitive on other markets. Thus, participation in the Frankfurt Book Fair or at the Irish Publishing Exhibition in New York can make an important contribution to sales efforts. The organisation of a national stand at, say, Frankfurt by the Irish Book Publishers' Association and Coras Trachtala can spread the costs and lighten the load on individual publishers.

I have indicated some of the problems facing Irish publishers, particularly on export markets; but let me add that I view the future with considerable optimism. Indeed, over the past few years Irish publishing has expanded considerably, and even our own sales outside Ireland have jumped by 80% this year, and we anticipate a considerable expansion on this improved figure.

ANNE HARRIS
and
MARY KENNY
and
HUGH LEONARD
and
HUGH MUNRO
and
JOHN BRODERICK
and
MICHAEL McKEOWN

Are amongst those who will be contributing regularly to the expanded edition of *Hibernia* as from this issue on AT YOUR COMMAND. Yes, over 80% of the responses to our recent questionnaire in *Hibernia* asked for a greater coverage of politics and current affairs. So as from this edition—

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Publishing in Ireland–2

Communicator Extraordinary

MICHAEL GILL

OF PUBLISHERS it has been said that, like the English as a race, they are incapable of philosophy. They deal in particulars and adopt Sydney Smith's dictum that one should take short views, hope for the best and trust God. Their days are reputedly filled with royalty rates, gross margins and discounts, first printings and last remainders. And for them it is reasonable to ask of a Yeats or a Tolstoy how many copies of his previous book were sold.

Yet there is a curious but diminishing mythology about the publishers' craft whereby it is considered a suitable calling for gentlemen only. Not for them (or so the myth would have it) the sordid trucking of commerce; and ulceration should it come is more likely to be the consequence of strenuously entertaining authors than that of balancing scarce means against excessive demands. But it is the maintenance of this balance which is at the centre of the publishing enterprise.

Publishing an enterprise? Basically yes; the enterprise of doing something about other people's ideas and sharing profit accordingly. Profit? Yes, profit. For no matter how exalted one's interpretation of the publisher's vocation, he does not have a mandate to multiply currency as he multiplies books. Regrettably the history of the printed word is littered by good men who thought otherwise.

The beginnings of modern publishing may be traced to the eighteenth century when the publisher was primarily a bookseller printing the books at the back of the shop and selling them at the front. His initial step was to choose an author or two who in turn recommended other authors. (In a near contemporary instance this is how **Ulysses** was first published by Sylvia Beach from her bookshop on the Rue de l'Odeon.) Only in comparatively recent times has the separation occured between publishing, printing and bookselling.

The division of labour has, of course, its Parkinsonian consequences and publishing provides no exception. It is a far cry from the modest personal enterprise of a man like Pat Wogan in the Dublin of the 1780s to the vast corporation of McGraw Hill in its suitably gargantuan headquarters on New York's Avenue of the Americas. Yet it is one of the humanising paradoxes of publishing that the modest successors of Mr. Wogan and the assigns of Mr. McGraw and Mr. Hill can not only co-exist but may even trade together.

There can be few industries where the problems of growth and expansion are so complex in their consequences as in publishing. It is not simply a matter of planning for the production of ever increasing units in new product lines each year, although marketing considerations are a vital part of the process. There are elements in publishing such as truth, integrity, style and human creativity which defy numerical analysis and which are as important to the responsible publisher as the strength of his current balance sheet. However, a drawerful of speculations on the current ills of mankind, no matter how eloquently expressed or convincingly argued, provide scant security for the annual visit to the bank manager.

Publishing in a growth situation has not only a large appetite for current capital but can take an alarmingly long time to digest it. From the payment of the author's advance to the buying of paper and print to the extension of credit to booksellers can occupy as long as five years in any single project; and then the eventual return is likely to be in the region of 14 or 15%. It is crucial to get the cash flow right, otherwise there can be the ludicrous situation of being unable to afford the reprint of a bestseller.

The purchase of a volume in the bookshop is the final act in a succession of efforts many of which seem to bear little relation to one another. The publishing house which is committed to producing, say, more than 25 books per year must have harnessed within its walls a team of people with radically varying—and on the surface, incompatible—talents. It is difficult for example to imagine any more sterile a confrontation than might occur between an editor and an accountant; yet if they do not meet daily in person nevertheless their professional concerns are of mutual importance. The editor who refuses to consider the financial consequences of his or her decisions is a weak editor; and the accountant for whom computer print-outs are the *only* source of truth and wisdom, is likely to be not only a bore but probably frustrated by finding himself in publishing.

But where, it must now be asked, enters the author on the scene? Is he relegated to the wings to passively observe the complex antics of his publisher? To an increasing extent books are made by publishers rather than offered by authors. The days of lists being built from manuscripts which gratuitously arrive by post have passed. To an increasing extent the initial impetus which leads to eventual publication comes from the publisher who defines a need or opportunity and persuades, cajoles or bribes an author into writing within an agreed context. This can even be true of fiction — that difficult and much glamourised category of literary ware. Of the 40,000 or so new books published in the English-speaking world in 1970 it may be safely assumed that generously more than a half were originated from publishers' suggestions, and that half again originated from manuscripts which were radically transformed as a result of a publisher's editorial intervention.

Does this indicate an intolerable and dangerous trend of take-over by insensitive commercial powers of the delicate and pure world of literature? Certainly not. The publisher is basically a communicator. His task is to assist his chosen authors to communicate, not necessarily with the largest readership, but with the most relevant one. And communication itself is a delicate art; it may call for a shout from the roof-tops, or a private whisper. It depends on what is being communicated and to whom. A tentative theory in quantum physics is not addressed to the same readership as that from which the executors of Ian Fleming continue to benefit, but it is the publisher's responsibility to ensure that *the quantum physicist and Mr. Fleming's estate* are appropriately served. One may be writing for hundreds, the other for millions; the publisher must identify for the author and serve the readership accordingly.

And the future? Are we headed towards an era of sophisticated electronic illiteracy in which the book and other printed media will subside to irrelevance? Some might have us believe so, but actual trends would seem to have it otherwise, as the number of books published each year outpaces its predecessor. Nevertheless, more and more people in publishing express concern at over production which is uneconomic, irrational and possibly leading to breakdown as conventional systems of distribution and storage groan beneath the ever increasing flow. However, over-emphasis on the inadequacy of the system, of simply tinkering with the works, may threaten those essential human components of the publishing industry on which its survival depends — imagination, flair and independent judgment.

Michael Gill is Managing-Director of Gill and Macmillan.

In the next issue, Hibernia Review of Books' will include Patrick Boyle on Tom Kilroy's novel The Big Chapel, **Bernard Share on Graham Greene's** A Sort of Life, **John Broderick on both Kingsley Amis and John le Carré, and Lorna Reynolds on Séan by Eileen O'Casey. Also Barbara Wright will discuss the prose work of Monk Gibbon.**

Publishing in Ireland–3

Book Design in Ireland

SEAN JENNET, the noted expert on book design and typography, discusses some of the books which are being displayed by the I.B.P.A. at Frankfurt.

Let us first look at the fundamental bases on which good design must rest. There are many good type designs available to the designer, too many, in fact. It is his business to select a type and a type size that will be suitable to the book in hand and to the paper on which it is to be printed, as well as to the printing process that is to be used. Not all types are suitable to smooth papers, not all to rough papers, not all to each printing process. The choice of type and type size will also be affected by the format the book is to have. The length of line in which it is to be set must also be given thought.

The ideal length is one that contains from ten to fifteen words on average; longer lines weary the reader, shorter ones give rise to bad spacing and spotty pages. We come here to a fundamental consideration of all book design: a book is a thing to be read and the comfort of the reader, the ease and effectiveness with which he is able to read, must be the prime consideration. The visual and tactile pleasure a book may provide are important too, but they are secondary to the prime function, which is to convey the author's message.

The effect of type may be varied by altering the spacing between words. Wide word-spacing, with additional space after stops at the end of sentences, is sufficient evidence of a printer or a designer ignorant or neglectful of informed preferences. It is, in short, a provincialism. The best designers of books from the early days of printing have always contended that type ought to be closely and evenly spaced — but close-spacing can be overdone, with too little space between words. A space equal to about the width of the letter i is acceptable.

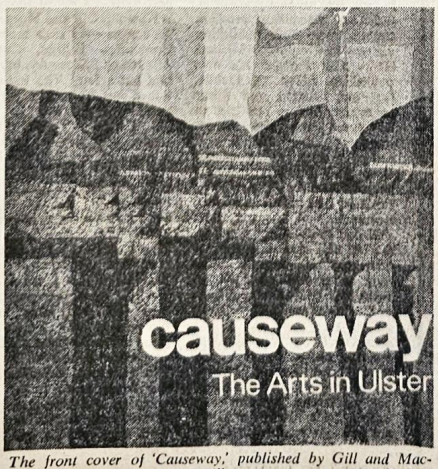
The preliminary pages of a book, including the title-pages, are where a book designer shows his quality. Some of our Irish publishers appear to think that a title-page ought to shout like a poster with thick bold type; that is a vulgarism. In general the preliminary pages call for orderly arrangement on the principle that the unit of a book is not a page but an opening, two pages at a view, a common basis of design that should extend from opening to opening throughout the whole book.

It is common practice to make the endpapers of books, that is what people call the flyleaves, plain white. I think we should make them nearly always coloured in one way or another, where they are not used for a map or some other element of the book. Coloured ends have been provided in several of these Irish books. Coloured ends ought to relate to a colour scheme applicable to the whole book, ranging from any coloured inks used in the printing to the colour of the binding case and the wrapper. This may appear a simple and obvious requirement, but it is commonly ignored and is not consistently observed even in the best of the books now under review.

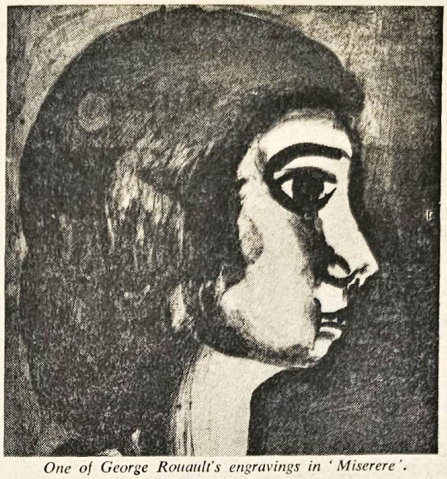
The first three books we shall look at are novels. *Call My Brother Back* is a paper-back with a striking three-colour drawing on the cover by an artist not named. Otherwise the book is commonplace, with poor typography and wide word-spacing, but with a large type that is easy to read. For some inexplicable reason the designer thought that Lombardic initials would be appropriate to this book. *Merciful Hour* is also ordinary, though better set, with a wrapper based on a good idea weakly handled. I cannot think why these two books should be included in the eighteen sent to Frankfurt. *The Horse of Selene* is much more professionally done and is competently printed on pleasant laid paper. Typographically it is a simple book, for there are no chapter heads or sub-heads, but the setting is good, the margins generous and well arranged, and the wrapper with its vigorous drawing of a horse is arresting.

Causeway is a square book. You may take it that any book designed to a square format thereby declares itself a book of up-to-the-minute design, and here is no exception. There are occasionally reasons why a book should be square, but there is not really much reason why *Causeway* should be so, or at least not enough to offset the additional trouble and expense that departure from the common oblong format entails. Nevertheless, *Causeway*, designed and printed in Northern Ireland, is good to look at, with full-colour reproduction of a painting by Colin Middleton on the cover. The title is on a clear plastic overlay. For some reason the spine has been left blank; when this book is in a bookcase it will be anonymous, and that I think is not good sense. The double-spread title-page shows a flow of coloured hexagons, deriving their shape from the Giants' Causeway, of course. The effect is too heavy and I think it would have been more reasonable to have used this design for the cover and Colin Middleton's painting for the frontispiece. The text is set in lines rather too wide for comfort, with the type area placed to the right so that a large margin on the left may be used for "footnotes." Paragraphs begin without an indent. To compensate for the absence of an indent paragraphs have been separated by a line of white space, and the inevitable result is to suggest that every paragraph is an individual statement. The paper is a smooth but not too glossy imitation-art, chosen to be both comfortable to the eye and satisfactory for the half-tone illustrations.

Miserere pretends to be a fine edition, with singular lack of success. It is bound in a coarse hessian blocked in brown, and this and the very impressive illustrations by George Rouault are, with the text, the best things about this book. The planning, however, is all at sea. The plates were printed separately in France by gravure, and in order to incorporate them in the book precisely in the positions required the process known as 'perfect' binding was employed. This is the kind of binding used on a writing pad, though of course with the pages more strongly glued. The decision to use this kind of binding for an allegedly fine edition on heavy paper was ill-advised. The resulting inch-thick wad of solid paper has been simply stuck into the cover no more strongly than into a paper-back, and the result is that the book is already coming apart, as one would expect. The designer has used a large size of Plantin for the text, a heavy type, and has chosen to do way with the head and tail margins almost completely. The titles of Monsignor Browne's Gaelic poems and of their translations are for some inexplicable reason set at the very bottom of the page in each instance. The determination to have the plates on left-hand pages and facing the poems has meant that in many instances one turns over on to an empty blank, and on some occasions on to a double blank, which is very odd. This publisher and their designer should spend a year in penance designing run-of-the-mill paper-backs. *The Guide to the National Monuments of Ireland* shows that they can do better.



The front cover of 'Causeway,' published by Gill and Macmillan.



One of George Rouault's engravings in 'Miserere'.

One cannot help comparing *The People of Ireland* with Synge's *Wallet of Photographs*. The technical quality of Synge's photography was lamentable, but his pictures for the most part show people at their typical occupations and in their everyday manner, and it is pictures of this kind that seem to me to deserve the title of 'people of Ireland' more than Colman Doyle's somewhat static portraits — which, nevertheless, are very well done of their kind. Doyle's quarto volume, bound in black cloth with a wrapper also principally black, is a book well produced and the arrangement and the press-work of the half-tones is good. Synge's *Wallet of Photographs* is a limited edition, with the text printed on Linotype Pilgrim on apple-green laid paper. The binding-case and the wrapper are of much duller grey-green paper—why should not the same green have been carried throughout? The end-papers are black. The title-page and the frontispiece do not appear to have been designed as a unit. The half-tone illustrations are on good quality white art paper, making the best of Synge's pictures, despite his uncertain technique and the deleterious effects of time on his negatives. These two books well deserve their inclusion in our eighteen, however.

We come now to three more the limited editions of the Dolmen Press. The term 'limited edition' has come to suggest a pretention to better quality than the common run of books, and in these three publications of the Dolmen Press, designed by Liam Miller, the pretention is justified. Though I have some criticisms of them they are a delight to handle and to look at and, what is important, to read. All three have typographical wrappers. Lady Gregory's *Coole* matches the wrapper to the binding-case, as we saw was the effect with Synge's *Wallet of Photographs*. The wording is subtly placed in a single size of large capitals, but in my opinion the colophon or symbol of the publisher, his DE, is too assertive. Quarter-binding in paper with cloth for the spine, lettered gilt, is a Dolmen mannerism, repeated on all three books. *Coole* has a section of Lady Gregory's house on the endpapers. The text is printed on a good white cartridge paper, the title simply set in two colours with a third for a medallion, the whole arrangement elegant and admirable. The text line is a little long. The quotations are differently leaded and this I do not care for, especially when the quotation is verse. Nor, in such a book, am I happy to have a rule between text and footnotes. The composition and word-spacing of the type are very good and the presswork is precise and the inking even.

A Tower of Polished Black Stones has an ingenious if slightly confusing typographical wrapper printed in two colours, black endpapers, and a text printed in rusty red and black inks on good white cartridge paper. The title-page, overwhelmed by a heavy black etching by Leonard Baskin, who probably did not design it to appear here, makes the title, in red, recessive against maining four of Leonard the black of the sub-title and the authors' names. The re-Baskin's illustrations are all versions in different techniques of the same full-frontal beak-headed demon or Fomorian. The text, set in America, is in a type of American origin, Bruce Rogers's Centaur, which ideally should be printed on a paper of coarse surface; on the smooth cartridge of this book it is too light and too weak. Composition and presswork are as excellent as we have come to expect from this publisher. My preference among these Dolmen Press books is for Synge's translations of the *Sonnets of Petrarch*, though I find its lack of consistency in colour distressing. The wrapper, with a pale smoky blue panel, is on paper of the some colour as the binding-case, as usual with Dolmen, but neither of these colours goes with the sepia roundels or the sage-green panels of the double-spread title-page — the best opening, by the way, of any of these eighteen books. The front board of the case has a large gilt monogram, placed in no perceptible relation to the lettering in the middle of the spine. The book is set in Bembo, with titles in capitals in sepia, and the paper is a white cartridge.

The conclusion to be drawn from this examination of Irish books is that the better ones will stand comparison with those of other countries and may win awards in competition at Frankfurt. However, the selectors in Ireland appear to have been uncertain what constitutes a well produced book. Or is it rather that they were required to produce eighteen books and had trouble making up the number? Or did they feel that their selection ought to be representative of Irish publishers in general rather than of only one or two publishers who, by their sustained standard of excellence, might well have hogged the field? They would not be alone in being influenced by either of these considerations. Is the figure eighteen too large? If the selectors of the books for the National Book League's annual exhibition in London regularly have difficulty in making up a hundred exhibitable volumes, Ireland, with its much smaller production, could be expected to strain at eighteen. In my opinion it would be better to restrict the number and to select only on the basis of excellence.

BOOKS MENTIONED ABOVE

Call My Brother Back, by Michael McLaverty. Paper-back. Allen Figgis, Ltd., Dublin. 50p.

Merciful Hour, by Bernard Share. Allen Figgis, Ltd. £1.50.

The Horse of Selene, by Juanita Casey. Dolmen Press, Dublin. £1.60.

Guide to the National Monuments of Ireland, by Peter Harbison. Gill and Macmillan, Ltd., Dublin £1.50. Paper-back.

Causeway: the Arts in Ulster, edited by Michael Longley. The Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Belfast, and Gill and Macmillan, Ltd., Dublin, Paper-back. £1.10.

Miserere, by Georges Rouault and Pádraig De Brún. Gill and Macmillan, Ltd., Dublin. No price.

The People of Ireland, by Colman Doyle. The Mercier Press, Cork. £3.75.

My Wallet of Photographs, by J. M. Synge and Lilo Stephens. Dolmen Press, Dublin. £5.00.

Coole, by Lady Gregory. Dolmen Press. £4.50.

A Tower of Black Stones, by William Butler Yeats. Dolmen Press. £6.00.

Some Sonnets of Petrarch, translated by J. M. Synge. Dolmen Press. £3.00.

Mercier Press

Waiting for the revolution

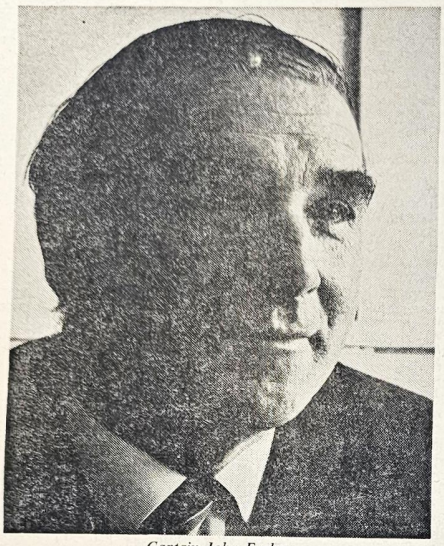
MOST publishing houses are associated with the mind and ideas of one man, but few Irish houses are so readily identified with their founder as is the Mercier Press. Captain John Feehan started publishing in 1944 with one book and a capital of £90—"rather foolhardy" is how he has described his aproach. His foolhardiness has since paid off handsomely, and the Mercier Press now has a very high reputation, and a very long list of books to its credit, by Irish standards at least.

Captain Feehan must also be one of the most accessible publishers in Ireland, since he has issued through Mercier his own views on publishing in this country, *An Irish Publisher and his World*. He is a man of very definite opinions, and spares no one in this document, from authors to printers, and includes a few sideswipes at publishers in the process.

Mercier's list appears at first glance to have a heavy concentration in it on religious materials. Captain Feehan's first book was religious (in the broadest sense) and he has maintained a strong interest in that field over the years — weathering in the process the publishing vicissitudes of the aftermath of Vatican II—without limiting the Press to it. His second book was Benedict Kiely's *Counties of Contention* (surely worth a reprint at the moment?), and this is indicative of the other main interest in the Mercier list, Irish life and letters.

Book publishing did not long remain the only string to the Mercier bow. Early on, Captain Feehan entered the field of record production, and has continued to be involved there.

However, a new departure in recent years has been pre-



Captain John Feehan

recorded tapes and cassettes. Most of these are on religious themes and topics, including a series of retreats for religious. Captain Feehan regards the tape and the cassette as something with which the book-publisher must come to terms: they are "clearly devastating in (their) implications for the printed book as we know it." Although he also believes that "nothing, of course, can ever entirely supercede the printed book," he is clearly not going to be caught on the hop when the revolution comes!

For the future, Mercier intends to get more deeply involved in the field of educational publishing (there is an obvious tie-up here with the electronic venture) and, perhaps, more books like Colman Doyle's *The People of Ireland* —a worthwhile objective. One feels that, for an Irish publisher, working in a land of writers—isn't it?—there is a surprising lack of creative writing in the Mercier list. John B. is there, and Frank MacManus, but the few other such books do not adequately represent the state of Irish writing. Perhaps that is another field to which Captain Feehan might turn—soon, one hopes.

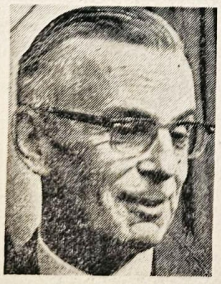
Cuala and New Writers' Press

Two small presses

ALTHOUGH they are the two main small presses in operation in Ireland at the moment it would be difficult to find much similarity (apart of course from their being "small") between the Cuala Press and the New Writers' Press. The former is a lately revitalised version of the Dun Emer, later the Cuala Press which was founded by Elizabeth Corbets Yeats, sister of the poet, in 1903 and which was mainly staffed by women until its cessation in 1946. During that period it published some eighty volumes, all hand-printed and in a uniform typographical style devised by Emery Walker.

It was due to the efforts of Senator Michael Yeats, Anne Yeats, Thomas Kinsella and Liam Miller that the press came to life again using the same hand press and type face originally employed in 1903. The first new edition from the new Cuala came earlier this year (and it was, not surprisingly a work of W. B. Yeats, *Reflections*, edited by Curtis Bradford from previously unpublished sections of the poet's 1908-1914 journals.

It is unlikely that you will find



Senator Michael Yeats — reviving the Cuala Press.

Reflections or any future Cuala Press titles generally available in Ireland. Rather they are meant for the export especially American, market, as is perhaps reflected by their price (*Reflections* costs five guineas) and their subject matter (mostly Yeatsiana).

There are some people who would perhaps regard such editions as little more than interesting, and pricey, curios only to be afforded by the literary tourist. Among them is Michael Smith who, besides being engaged in the full-time task of keeping his New Writers' Press on the straight and narrow path of publishing economics, is also something of a crusader against what he believes to be "the rigid insularity of the Irish literary consciousness". Publisher and crusader go hand in hand with him, in fact, and it is difficult at the best of times to know where one stops and the other begins.

He founded the New Writers' Press in June, 1967, and has already published some twenty books, two broadsides or *Versheets*, and four editions of the *Lace Curtain*, a magazine of poetry and criticism. Among the book-titles are *Poems* by Jorge Luis Borges, translated from the Spanish by Anthony Kerrigan, *Friend Songs* by Pearse Hutchinson and the more recent Thomas Mac Greevy's *Collected Poems*. Michael Smith sees the N.W.P. "as providing just what bigger Irish publishers do not: a forum for Irish writing that is both modern and undiscovered—precisely the sort that has never been, out of principle, conveniently 'Anglo-Irish'." Fighting words indeed which many people might find it difficult to sympathise with but the bets are that Michael Smith and the New Writers' Press will be something to be reckoned with in the future.

Irish University Press

Changing an Image

The tiny band of dedicated workers, against all the odds, bring off a major publishing coup—it's not at all what one would associate with the sort of company which takes a full-page advertisement in the TLS, or which produces a thousand volumes at $60,000. Yet the tiny band of workers is certainly closer to the actuality than the "Big Business" image that Irish University Press have acquired in four years of life.

The production of the almost incomprehensibly massive series of British Parliamentary Papers would completely dominate the catalogue of any publishing house for a long time. The wonder is that I.U.P. have managed to achieve a much wider list than that, and intend to follow that policy more closely now that Parliamentary Papers series is almost complete. In particular, they are concerned that their list does not, at present, reflect as they would wish the character of an Irish publishing house. Certainly their prices do not, and are geared to reflect North American market prices (which in general are substantially higher than English or Irish book prices).

I.U.P., so far at least, bear what appears to be the stamp of a highly individual mind—such a dominant interest in the re-publication of essentially bibliographical material, almost to the exclusion of all else at first, is unusual to say the least. It would be surprising if, that project over, a certain ambivalence did not creep into the company, to be reflected in its activities, and this may be seen at the moment in I.U.P.'s recently announced appointment as sole agents for "Open University" books and materials.

However, the involvement with educational materials at prices which will be accessible to the general public, as opposed to the more exclusive, library oriented publications they have concentrated on until now, will help to change I.U.P.'s image in the direction they intend—as will such ventures as their co-operation with An Club Leabhar, which will enable the Club to offer several I.U.P. publications to members at substantial discounts (for example, Lhuyd's *Archaeologia Britannica* of 1707, reduced from £15.75 to £10.75).

Paperback editions of some of the monographs they have already produced will be a new departure for I.U.P., and yet another facet of their plans to diversify. They will be concerned to maintain a high quality in what they produce, and naturally much of their output will still be in the nature of reprints, but of a less bibliographical sort, and with more emphasis on the Irish side of the Press. Some thirty volumes of wholly Irish material, not as a series, but in single numbers, are planned for the near future, dealing with such diverse subjects as medieval figure-sculpture, folklore, revolutionaries and Belleek porcelain.

Gill and Macmillan

Two in One

PREDICTIONS are a particularly risky business especially when it comes to publishing, but if the Irish publishing industry is ever to be revolutionised then it will be most likely Gill and Macmillan will do the job and they should be well-equipped for it being an unique fusion of two old well-established publishing houses. Just thirteen years after the two Macmillan brothers started upon their publishing venture in Cambridge Michael Henry Gill founded his own publishing house in Dublin. Just one hundred and thirty years after that, in mid-1968 to be exact, the two houses merged together with a new company, each 'parent' at the same time however retaining its own identity. The coming together led to a complete overhauling of the old M.H. Gill list. In 1966, for instance, the list was almost exclusively composed of books on theology or general religious interest and of educational textbooks aimed at Irish schools.

Since then there has been a gradual "secularisation" (spurred on, of course by the general post Vatican Council decline in Catholic publishing) and a widening out into more varied fields. Religious books are still there of course—the books of Michael Quoist for instance (high *First Prayers of Life* has sold over 250,000 wealth alone) have been an outstanding success. Another success they in the religious field was *Logos Books*, a series of paperbacks which were under the guidance of Patrick Masterson of the Department of Philosophy at U.C.D. and which reflected accurately (this was, perhaps one of the main reasons for their success) post-Vatican Council thought.

Now the Gill and Macmillan list ranges over such topics as Economics, Politics, Current Affairs and Philosophy, to mention but a few. The last-mentioned has become a particularly important area in their list. Earlier this year, for instance, they published Patrick Masterson's *Atheism*, and more philosophical titles are scheduled for the future. The company is, in fact, slowly but surely venturing into areas which have for a long time been something of a tabu for most Irish publishers. Poetry has not as yet featured prominently in the company, but, with the publication earlier this year of Basil Payne's *Love in an Afternoon* and the forthcoming *Under a Stone* by Conleth Ellis, the indications are that it will in the future. The company has also turned its attention to fiction, and this year they will be publishing their first novel, *Down the Bath Rocks* by Patrick O'Connor.

Dolmen Press

Continuing a

Liam M

WHILE Gill and Macmillan may well be the pioneers of future change in the Irish publishing industry, to find out where the publishing "revival" has its roots one must go back to 1951 when Liam Miller founded the Dolmen Press. In a way, the founding of the press had the same significance as the founding of the Cuala Press in 1903. Once again Irish writers had the chance of being published by an Irish concern and shortly after its founding offers of manuscripts came from such people as Padraig Colum, Frank O'Connor and Mary Lavin.

Another tradition which Liam Miller inherited from the Cuala Press was concern with the quality of design in each book. No two Dolmen books ever look the same; each one is designed as a reflection of the matter of the text with the aim of having both as integral parts of each other. Frequently also work by Irish graphic artists is included. As testimony to the high level of design

Other Pu

BESIDES the publishers mentioned above, which are the main ones, there are also five others which are worth mentioning—Anvil Books—situated in Tralee, Co. Kerry, are the only publishers besides The Mercier Press situated outside Dublin. They publish paperbacks, some of which are reprints of what could be loosely called "Irish Republican Studies" (Florence O'Mahony's *Soldier Patriot*, a biography of Thomas MacCurtain and Tom Barry's *Guerrilla Days in Ireland*), while there are also historical studies (*The Norman Invasion of Ireland*, by Richard Roche) and current politics (Andrew Boyd's *Holy War in Belfast* and Sean Edwards' *The Gun, The Law and the People of Ireland*). The Talbot Press is an old-established firm and provides a fairly varied list. They have had their success with the series of books by humorist John D. Sheridan, such as *Laugh To Think* and *The*

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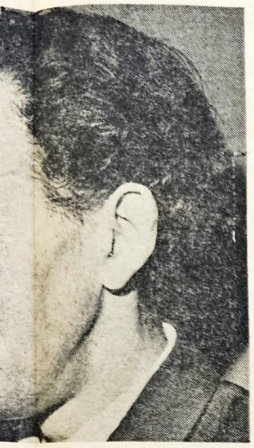

Liam Miller

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which Liam Miller has introduced into Irish publishing one has only to look, for instance, at Thomas Kinsella's *The Tain* with brush drawings by Louis le Brocquy or this year's *Death of Laura*, Synge's translation of sonnets by Petrarch.

One of the main reasons perhaps why there is so much concern for design in The Dolmen Press is that their list is geared mainly towards the export market. The titles themselves reflect this. Only two books in Irish, for example, have ever come from the press and the list is mainly dominated by Anglo-Irish literature Themes —Yeatsian scholarship is particularly profuse. Poetry too is fairly well catered for; the Dolmen Poetry Ireland Editions, of which the fourteenth edition has been reached, have brought many young poets into print for the first time. As well about three or four poetry collections from Dolmen have been Poetry Society choices or recommendations.

Publishers

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Right Time. They have also published some children's books, as *The Night of the Wolf*, by Winefride Nolan, and Standish O'Grady's *In the Gates of the North* and *Fionn and His Companions*. One particularly interesting reprint which they issued earier this year was *The Story of the Irish Citizen's Army*, by Sean O'Casey, first published in 1919 and the first work for which O'Casey ever received payment.

The four remaining publishing houses, A.P.C.K., Geoffrey Chapman, James Duffy and Co., Ltd., and Veritas cater mainly for religious books. A.P.C.K. is the main publisher for the Church of Ireland, while Geoffrey Chapman have published a few non-religious titles, such as Jerome Kiely's *Seven Year Island*, Don Farrell's *Young Guide to Ireland* and Don Lucey's and Donal Kaldorn's *Rural Industrialisation*.

Publishing in Irish

Rise and Decline

THE GAELIC LEAGUE was the prime mover in the publication of Irish language material for the first quarter of the century and indeed its publishing company Clódhanna Teoranta, is the oldest private company formed for that purpose. Naturally, most of the items it produced in the early part of the century were either pure propaganda or internal to the organisation. However, as early as 1895-97, the Gaelic League had published or assisted the publication of folklore and of O'Growney's *Simple Lessons*. The following year, it made its first foray into the field of modern Irish literature with the publication of *Séadna*, and from then on, the house followed a pattern of publication which is very comprehensive: teaching and propaganda, texts from the earlier period, modern novels and plays (many of the latter designed for children), and internal reports and programmes. An important part of the Gaelic League's output during this period consisted of arrangements, for school and other choirs and bands, of Irish airs and songs.

The League, together with the Irish Texts Society — a much more scholarly publisher!— formed the backbone of Irish Clódhanna Teoranta—or indeed were already involved in translations, and in adaptations of the old stories, it was a logical way to widen the scope of publishing in Irish without demanding the impossible from the creative writers.

In this way, many of the most important creative writings of the western world became available in the most impeccable Irish: Chekhov, Cervantes, the classics of English literature and so on. Unfortunately, An Gúm also rapidly became hogtied by its own policies, to the extent that new material, written originally in Irish, frequently went to the tail of the queue instead of the head, and the writers gradually became disenchanted, frustrated and embittered.

In the late thirties, a new generation of enthusiasts for Irish arrived on the scene, a generation which had not been through the Rising or the enervating Ciil War. A nucleus of them formed in Dublin, and their vitality and energy led to a new surge of publishing in Irish which commenced during the years of isolation in the second World War. The magazine, *Cómhar* came on the scene, as did *Inniu* and *Feasta*. Seán O hEigeartaigh established

Bean Brid Ui hEigeartaigh of Sairseal agus Dill

publishing until some years after the formation of the State. Indeed, it was not until after the Gaeltacht Commission of 1925 had reported that the new government took any substantial hand in publishing Irish material. Their first efforts were much along the same sort of lines as the League's series of "cluichí," or plays, designed, one presumes, for familiarising children with the use of Irish in a painless way, simple readers, and so on. It was not long, however, before the Government publishers found what was to be the mainstay of their lists for a long time: translations of the classics.

At the time, it was a strategy of almost perfect simplicity and economy. There was no substantial pool of creative talent writing in Irish; there were many native speakers who were literate, and whose talent, it was felt, ought to be utilised towards the revival. Put them translating! To the extent that many of the established writers were already publishing through Sáirséal agus Dill. Cló Morainn, An Clíchomhar, FNT, Gael-Linn—all had their birth during the following period. Here, at last, was the groundswell movement that would finally re-establish the Irish language.

By the mid-fifties, however, it was obvious that the enthusias alone was not to be sufficient. The economics of the matter had caught up with the new publishing houses, and a new idea was needed. It was soon forthcoming, in the form of the Club Leabhar. This Irish Book Club was a concerted effort to increase the overall average sales for books in Irish, in order to allow the companies the financial lee-way they needed. The initial response was good. The club had an extensive list to choose from, the public was enthusiastic, and sales were good. It could not last, murmured the sceptics— and of course it didn't. The publishers began to limit their lists to the sort of book the club was likely to choose, and to rely on the club for sales. Such rudimentary distribution systems as had been developed were, apparently, abandoned.

It is tempting, and not altogether inappropriate, to see the deliberations of the Commission on the Revival of the Irish Language as a factor here too. Many people regarded the forthcoming report of this Commission as the Panacea which would cure all ills and, pending its appearance, were content to rest on their oars. By the mid-sixties, when the report finally appeared, publishing in Irish had sunk to an abysmal depth. *Cómhar*, in an editorial in March, 1964, complained: "Are we to suffer for ever under a mound of historical and folkloric biographies? . . . For whose benefit does the club exist, readers or writers? One would think it was publishers and printers they were most concerned about, and if this is so, it is a scandalous situation."

Meanwhile, of course, publishing and printing costs have spiralled. While there are substantial Government grants to assist the publication of Irish books and journals, they have certainly not increased pro rata, and the publisher is in nothing like as advantageous a position as he was, say, in 1960-62. The standard of production has improved out of all recognition—even in the conservative Gúm—but unfortunately, the standard of contents has by no means kept pace. Even the introduction of the rich Butler Prize (this year's awards are to be announced soon, according to informed sources) has not had as much effect as the sponsors had hoped. There is a growing tendency to opt for the "instant history" and translations of new books for nominal authors, as opposed to original works in Irish.

There is an apparent fifteen-year cycle in Irish language publishing, if such an analysis is not totally out of place in these matters. New departures can be seen in the mid-twenties, about 1940, and in the mid-fifties. Perhaps it is time the publishers, and the revivalists in general, took a long, hard look at their business, and tried to find another new initiative.

Allen Figgis

First Novels

APART perhaps from the Irish University Press's coup in publishing the British Parliamentary Papers Allen Figgis must go down in Irish publishing history as the person who has undertaken one of the most successful publishing ventures ever. This, of course, was his one-volumed *Encyclopaedia of Ireland* which was first published in 1967. Since then it has sold something over 16,000 copies and still continues to go strong, especially in the United States. The American market has in fact provided some other successes for Allen Figgis, notably *Irish Families, Their Names, Arms and Origins* and it may well be that the more recently published *Famous Irish Lives*, fifty biographies of famous Irish men and women by Bernard Share, will follow the same course.

Successes such as these, however, have by no means spoiled Allen Figgis and it would be mistaken to regard him as a publisher just out to make a fast buck on the American market. Like other Irish publishers he is quite conscious of the exodus of Irish writers which has taken place to English publishing houses and he has tried, with some degree of success, to change this situation. Though all his books have one thing in common in that they are either by an Irish author or have a strong Irish connection, his list is quite varied and covers topics ranging from gynaecology (as in *Life Cycle* by Michael Solomons) to poetry (Eoghan O Tuairise's *Weekend*).

Especially worth noting in the Allen Figgis list are the *riverrun* books, a series of attractively produced and relatively cheap paperbacks. These are made up of a mixture of some astute choices of reprints such as Sean O Faolain's biography of Daniel O'Connell, *King of the Beggars* or Monk Gibbon's *The Seals*, as well as some previously unpublished titles. Of these the ones most worthy of notice are three first novels—*Sausages on Tuesday* by Eamon Francis, *The Sunburst of a Dove* by Patrick Kennelly, and *Honour Thy Father* by Eamonn McGrath. So far Allen Figgis has been the only Irish publisher to take any consistent interest in fiction, which at the best of times can be a rather sticky market.

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Publishing in Ireland–6

The Educational Market

BILL CONNOLLY

IRISH EDUCATIONAL publishers produce school textbooks which are rarely available when wanted, look pretty awful when they can be got and cost a good deal more than they should. How often have these hardy annuals been brought to public notice in the penetrating three-minute radio interview or in the heart-scalded cry of a foot-weary parent in the correspondence columns of our newspapers. Have these accusations any validity and, if they have, is anything being done about the situation or can anything be done? The simple answer to these questions is yes and no.

This is not just the answer of a politician, it reflects the complicated reality of the situation. If new school courses are introduced without adequate preparation and notice, textbooks will not be produced in time to meet student demand. At the same time, there would seem to be little point in reprinting textbooks which were produced for the old courses. Nevertheless, teachers, sometimes in desperation at the lack of new texts, sometimes through lack of conviction that the new course is any better than the old, continue to prescribe the old books for their classes.

Planning and propaganda, and this is what we are talking about, are clearly functions of the Department of Education. Goodwill, and there is ample evidence of this on the part of many individuals in the Department, in itself is not enough. The introduction of new courses must be planned in such a way as to allow the minimum two-year notice which publishers have consistently claimed to be necessary for the production of a **good** textbook. Propaganda is necessary to familiarise teachers with the new content and teaching methods involved in any significantly changed curriculum.

From the publisher's viewpoint the problem is one of time and talent. Of course, it is possible to produce printed material in under two years. In exceptional circumstances an exceptional effort can be made. When the exceptional becomes the rule, a situation develops in which books are unavailable when needed, or are produced in a manner which leaves something to be desired. For example, books produced for a foreign market can be disembowelled, a hack author can be engaged and non-books which look as good as they are can be churned out. There are some publishers who evidently believe that their sole responsibility is to get a manuscript from an author and hand it to a printer. The many misprints, euphemistically described as 'printer's errors,' in these books and their physical appearance are evidence of this. There are other publishers who do devote time to seeing to it that the words are spelled correctly and the commas are in place, but that is about all. There is a third small, but significant number who see their role as originators and who are aware of the necessity for design. With them size, paper, type, layout and graphics, as well as cover design, share equal importance with the content. The products of these few compare favourably with the best in the world. They were willing to resist the temptation of the hasty product and the profit that went with it, and, happily, the response from teachers and students has justified their efforts. The appearance and success of such textbooks on the Irish market in recent years has begun to have an effect on the work of other publishers. These begin to realise that teachers, presented with a real and not a 'Hobson's' choice, will avoid the shoddy. In a competitive situation refusal to buy is the best guarantee that the second-rate will not be produced.

Perhaps even more important than time is the availability of talent. Assuming the existence of publishing talent, the other area for concern is the relatively small number of potential first-class authors that can reasonably be expected to exist in a population as small as ours. These people must be carefully sought out and researched. Contrary to the popular notion, a nation of talkers the Irish may be but of writers they are not. With that truth contained in all generalisations, it may be said that in educational writing the individual's enthusiasm to see his name in print is usually in inverse ratio to his ability. The type of person needed is not just someone who can write, but someone who has a deep knowledge of his subject, coupled with the extraordinary ability of communicating this to children at different learning stages without oversimplifying to the point of falisification and, at the same time, without consciously writing down to them.

The possessors of this extraordinary ability are few and, as is to be expected, very busy people. Their main motive in undertaking the onerous task of writing is the usually unvaunted one of concern for the personal development, cultural, social and religious of children. It seems unbelievable, then, that they should be penalised as some recently have. Not long ago a cross-Channel newspaper described the Republic as 'a little bit of haven' since it declared itself a tax haven for such writers as Gerald Hanley, Len Deighton, Lennox Robinson and (hopefully) for 'even good old Mickey Spillane.' But some educational authors were informed that their work as a textbook would not come under the provisions of the Section. The clear implication is that their work does not contain the 'original, creative, artistic or cultural' merits of an episode of 'Me Mammy' or the Sean Bourke tour de force. The same article spoke of the suitable anonymity of those who decide if a work has cultural merit. In their anonymity, suitable or otherwise, they are prepared to back their judgment to the extent that tax concession is given to writers, even if their work is banned here. A true example of putting our money where their mouths are or, as the writer put it 'a delicious irony which could only have been born in a Celtic situation.' One way or another, textbook has become a dirty little word not worthy of inclusion in the litany of Ireland's new meritocracy (?).

And this brings up the matter of textbook prices. It is not so long ago that, in a silly season of the Dail, we were treated to the sublime twaddle of a gallery-playing spokesman on education, who spoke with apparent naivete of what a good thing it would be 'if there was more continuity in the textbooks and less change from year to year . . . especially in a family where textbooks can be handed down to members who usually attend the same schools.' If this gentleman and others like him are really concerned that textbooks be made available at reasonable prices, perhaps they could divert some of their oratorical efforts from the purely rhetorical to an attempt to convince the anonymous arbiter that a textbook can be original, can be creative, can be artistic, can be cultural. The alternative is that educational publishers compensate the possessors of the scarce talent already mentioned. This will, of necessity, result in higher retail prices.

As things stand at present, some Irish educational publishers have consistently absorbed increased costs almost to the point of folly. The simple test to verify this is to compare Irish textbooks with British textbooks of similar quality, and remember the much greater potential of the British market when doing so. Of course, purchase of textbooks in Britain is subsidised by the taxpayers. But then, as is well known, the British are and always were a non - artistic non - cultural race! The incidental appearance of their Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Wordsworth, Shelley and so on were obviously the exceptions which proved the rule.

Irish textbooks sometimes are not available when wanted: there are reasons. They look pretty awful: they have and some still do, but not all. They cost a good deal more than they should: they simply do not. If education is important and if the children of the nation are to be cherished, surely it is equally important that they get the best form of that indispensable tool of education — the textbook. It is time that **we** put **our** money where **our** mouths are.

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Address by Liam Miller, President of the Irish Book Publishers' Association

PUBLISHING IN IRELAND is a small industry in statistical terms, but one which means a great deal to our country, both as an integral component of our national identity and as an ambassador for that identity abroad. The recently issued Annual Report of Coras Tractala stresses the importance of our small industry in an international sense:

> An important development in the publishing industry has been the formation of the Irish Publishers' Association with the aim of establishing the industry's products and services on a secure footing in international markets. In our work with the Association we jointly organised an exhibition of Irish publishing in New York and a further national participation in the Frankfurt Book Fair. Plans were made for further activities in 1971 and these are expected to enhance Ireland's growing reputation as a centre of quality printing and publishing.

Publications

One important function of our Association is to make information about Irish publishing activity available, particularly in areas outside Ireland and our efforts in this field, through our publications, have been welcomed and favourably commented upon. Three issues each have appeared of our bibliographical listing, *Books From Ireland*, and of our news bulletin, *Stadclo*. We plan to add to our publications a complete listing of all Irish Published books in print, a necessary bibliographical reference work for librarians and booksellers with Irish interests throughout the world.

Frankfurt 1970

Our participation in the Frankfurt Book Fair in September of last year was a valuable experience to those of us who attended and prompted much thought on the form of presentation of this year's participation. Many valuable contacts were made with colleagues from other countries, of which I would mention our meeting with Mr. Lloyd O'Neill, president of the Australian Book Publishers' Association who, during a subsequent visit to Dublin, allowed us to profit from his experience of organising an Association in a country where the problems facing the publisher have many parallels with ours.

New York 1971

CLO '71, an exhibition of Irish printing and publishing was organised by Coras Tractala at Ireland House in New York this spring and resulted in a growth in our book exports to the United States and opened up fresh outlets for Irish books in America. The exhibition was opened by our Ambassador, Mr. Warnock and was well attended by American publishers, editors, members of the book trade and librarians.

The necessity of establishing some permanent American representation for the Association and its members was one of the principal topics during CLO and discussions were held with several agents. Since then this matter has been pursued and an appointment is pending.

Three Irish literary evenings were held in New York during CLO, our hosts on these occasions being The James Joyce Society of New York and of the English Departments of New York University and of Columbia University. Each occasion was accompanied by lively discussion of Irish books and publishing activity, and the final evening at Columbia University was marked by readings by the Irish Publishers of poetry and prose from their lists, including some readings in Irish. The large, mainly student, audience on that occasion expressed a great interest in books from our lists being made more readily available in American bookstores.

Value Added Tax

Concern about the implications of the introduction of Value Added Tax from next January had led to an exchange of letters between our Secretary and the Revenue Commissioners, and a meeting at Dublin Castle at which we stated our case for a minimal rating for books. This would be in accordance with practice in Britain and in several European countries where books are given either a nil rating, or a lower rating than other commodities. At the recommendations of the Revenue Commissioners we have now put our case to the Minister for Finance and await his reply.

CLO Dublin 1972

To mark International Book Year, we propose to have an Irish Book Exhibition in Ireland next Spring which should prove useful in promoting our activities in our home market. Ireland has always been a good market for books and I feel that this display of Irish publishing to our own public will increase interest in books with Irish imprints. A book design section is being included in the next design competition sponsored by I.C.A.D. (The Institute of Creative Advertising and Design), and the results will be exhibited in Dublin, both at the I.C.A.D. Exhibition, and at the CLO display.

In connection with the Dublin show, we feel it might be possible to publish a small anthology of prose and verse, both in Irish and in English, chosen from all our lists, which would give a cross section of the best work being published in Ireland. As 1972 is International Book Year, both the Dublin show and the anthology will provide a national contribution to the International effort to promote books and reading.

Publishing in Ireland–7

The prince of Dublin printers

Bernard Share

"A character worthy of honest praise and assiduous imitation" — thus the *Hibernian Magazine* for September 1775 described George Faulkner, the Dublin publisher of the first collected edition of the works of Jonathan Swift in 1734-'5 and of many other editions thereafter. The tone of these "Authentic Memoirs" of Faulkner is that of the conventionally fulsome obituary, but there is enough in the account of his life to make us curious about a man who seems to have managed to stay on the right side of the tetchy dean through many vicissitudes, and to have been content to work closely with him with little or no open acknowledgement or thanks.

All his writing life Swift professed a reluctance to have anything to do with printers and publishers — two offices usually filled by one man — and pretended a supreme indifference as to the appearance or non-appearance of his works. He was not, however, above playing practical jokes on the public by pretending that what he had written had really been written by somebody else and hotly denying the authorship, and there is evidence that he co-operated closely with Faulkner in the matter of the 1734-'5 edition and on many occasions thereafter. Writing to Pope on May 1st, 1733, he offers the following deceptively laconic account of his involvement: "A Printer came to me to desire he might print my works (as he call'd them) in four volumes, by subscription. I said I would give no leave, and should be sorry to see them printed here. He said they could not be printed in London . . . He said he would be glad of my permission, but as he could print them without it, and was advis'd that it could do me no harm, and having been assur'd of numerous subscriptions he hoped I would not be angry at his pursuing his own interest, etc. Much of this discourse past, and he goes on with the matter, wherein I determined not to intermeddle, though it be much to my discontent; and I wish it could be done in England, rather than here, although I am grown rather indifferent in every thing of that kind". Perhaps the indifference is no more than the traditional mistrust that exists between author and printer — and Swift had no high opinion of the trade in general—(*One thorough bookselling rogue*, he wrote to Pope in 1716, *is better qualified to vex an author than all his contemporary scribblers in Critic or Satire)* — but it is curiously offhand for a man who had known the printer in question since at least 1727, when he had taken the initiative in seeking his services. The *Hibernian Magazine* recorded the interview: "On the death of Mr. Harding, the dean's former printer (in 1725), he sent for the printer of the *Dublin Journal*, and was waited on by Mr. James Hoey, whom the dean asked: 'if he was a printer?' Mr. Hoey answered: 'he was an *apology* for one'. The dean, piqued at the freedom of this answer, asked further: 'where he lived?'. He eplied: '*facing* the Tholsel'. The dean then turned from Mr. Hoey and bid him send his partner. Mr. Faulkner accordingly waited on the dean and being asked the same questions, answered: 'he was', also, that he lived *opposite to* the Tholsel, 'then', said the dean, 'you are the man I want', and from that time commenced his friend".

The point about the anecdote is that Hoey's use of the word *facing* in what was then a slang or unaccepted sense irritated Swift, just as he would be irritated by the "let's face it" of today; but apart from Hoey's "with-it" manner of speech he seems to have deserved his contemporary dismissal as a "pretended printer". The partnership between Hoey and Faulkner began in 1727 and they ran a bookshop and printing office in Skinner Row at the corner of Christchurch Lane, until an argument resulted in Faulkner's setting up on his own in Essex Street, where he had earlier served his apprenticeship to a Mr. Hume and fallen in love with his daughter. At first the romance had prospered. Miss Hume looked upon him with a favourable eye, and these sweet expectations made him ardently wish for an expiration of his apprenticeship; but alas! when the long-expected period arrived, he met with a bitter disappointment. The girl refused to marry him; but when she fell on hard times later in life he sent her assistance, though refusing to see her.

He seems to have made a good recovery from his amorous disappointments, and when interviewed by Swift was well on the way to earning his title of "the prince of Dublin printers". He had founded his *Dublin Journal* in 1725, and it continued to flourish until fifty years after his death in 1775. Swift was a contributor, both of the odd squib and of virulently worded "small ads" seeking vengeance on the robbers of his vineyard. In 1735 Faulkner fell foul of the Castle for publishing *A New Proposal for the Better Regulation of Quadrille* which one Sergeant Betterworth, M.P., felt to contain material prejudicial to his good name. The publisher was committed to Newgate and after making several applications and a public submission paid his fees for release in sets of Swift's works! Swift wrote a formal little poem commemorating the event: but perhaps there is a hint of gratitude and friendship hidden within its classical framework.

Faulkner, according to contemporary witness, was more than a little inclined to social climbing and name-dropping, and it must have been painful for him to have to conceal the true nature of his relationship with the dean. He was satirised frequently, in particular in *Samuel Foote's* play *The Orators,* which was produced in the winter of 1762 at Smock Alley and introduced Faulkner as *Peter Paragraph,* with the catch-line " I know peers and peers know me". More intriguing is another line given to *Paragraph*: "Quoth his lordship to me, with respect to your journal, I would that your paper was whiter or your ink blacker". This would seem on the face of it an unfair jibe at a printer who, if nothing else, was a good craftsman. A Faulkner page is invariably well laid out and his own mark, an essay in eighteenth-century ornament, is not without elegance. He was also the first Dublin printer to undertake expensive works on his account, instead of merely reprinting London editions. As his obituarist put it: "He is entitled to the praise of the first encourager of his art in this kingdom, which has saved to the nation the great sums that were formerly sent out of it for books". This age could benefit from another Faulkner.

Lord Chesterfield offered Faulkner a knighthood which he refused but in 1768 he was elected Sheriff of the City of Dublin. He had earlier lost a leg from an infection contracted whilst on a journey to England, and so paid a fine in lieu of assuming the responsibilities of office. In 1770 he was made an alderman. A satirical work published shortly after this described him as a man who 'hath lived with the first wits of the present age in great credit, and upon a footing of much intimacy and kindness. He is well known to have been the particular friend of the Dean of St. Patricks, and at this moment corresponds with the Earl of Chesterfield, whose letters will be published by him immediately after the demise of the said earl . . . his Journal is circulated all over Europe, and taken in at all the coffee-houses in Constantinople, besides Bath, Bristol, Boston, Tunbridge Wells, Brighthelmstone, Virginia and Eyre-Connaught'.

"The style of Mr. Faulkner, which was often unconnected, and abounding with epithets, principally owing to a luxuriant, but uncorrected imagination, is happily enough imitated . . .". To his fellow-Dubliners he was clearly something of a figure of fun, but no doubt they did not know, as we still do not know, the extent of Faulkner's influence upon the difficult Dean, scorning publication but anxious to be heard, reviling printers but conscientiously correcting Alderman George's proof sheets and writing anonymous prefaces to his collections of *Swiftiana.* Whatever Swift's attitude to his business associate, the latter's admiration is clearly expressed in the obituary notice which appeared in the *Dublin Jaurnal* of October 22nd, 1745, and which is almost certainly Faulkner's:

"Last Saturday at three o'clock in the Afternoon died that great and eminent Patriot the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Swift His Genius, Works, Learning and Charity are so universally admired, that for a News Writer to attempt his Character would be the highest presumption. Yes, as the Printer hereof is proud to acknowledge his infinite Obligations to that Prodigy of Wit, he can only lament, that he is by no Means equal to so bold an undertaking . . .".

Faulkner's own end was not untypical of him. In the words of the *Authentic Memoir:* "Mr. Faulkner's love of social life which was rather indulged by his city honours, in some measure precipitated his end: an uninterrupted state of good health threw him off his guard, and he seemed either insensible of the approaches of old age, or to disregard them. He had dined lately with some gentlemen at an outlet near the city, in a tavern which was newly painted . . . Here, he caught a severe cold, which was attended with the retention of urine, and a violent hickup from the effects of the paint, which confined him to his bed, and in the course of 10 days put an end to his life". He left £100 to Swift's Hospital for "Fools and Mad".

William Faulkner

The above article was first published in "The Dublin of Jonathan Swift," a pamphlet produced by "The Harp" magazine.

Some Irish Literary Awards

The Butler Awards: Sponsored by An Foras Cultúr Gael - Mheiriceánach (Irish American Cultural Institute), these awards are given every two years or so for the best new books in Irish. The money (1st prize £2,000, 2nd prize £1,000, 3rd prize £500) has been provided by Patrick and Aimée Butler, St. Paul, Minnesota. The result of the third set of Butler Awards is to be announced this autumn.

The Gregory Medal: Under the auspices of the Academy of Letters, the Gregory Medal is awarded at three-year intervals "in appreciation of the general work of an Irish writer or in appreciation of a specific work.' The terms of award of the Medal were first established in 1935, and the first three medals were awarded to W. B. Yeats, Æ (George Russell) and G. B. Shaw.

The Æ Memorial Awards: Also sponsored by the Academy of Letters, this award is occasionally given in the form of a sum of money for unpublished work.

The Denis Devlin Memorial Award for Poetry: £300 awarded every three years for the best book of poetry in English published by an Irish citizen in the preceding three years. Sponsored by An Comhairle Ealaíon (The Arts Council).

Macaulay Fellowship: £1,000 fellowship awarded, in the sphere of literature, every five years. Also sponsored by An Comhairle Ealaíon.

An Comhairle Ealaíon also makes an award of £300 every three years for the best original poetry in Irish.

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BOOKCHAT
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The Autumn List

THERE ARE many people, I'm sure, who could if they wished find some cause for complaint with the list of books which Irish publishers have in store for us this autumn. Children, for instance. Of the one hundren and thirty-two titles listed in *Books From Ireland*, a pamphlet published by the Irish Book Publishers' Association there aren't three or two, in fact there isn't even *one* title which I expect could be put without hesitation into the hands of a child. Women also, especially the liberated, might also feel they have grounds for suspecting Irish publishers as being basically misogynistic. Only two women writers are to be found and neither is their one title which could be described as being characteristically feminine.

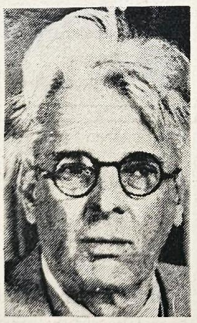
A quick look through the list will tell you where the preferences lie. Though some people may quibble about my inclusion of certain titles under the category, I reckon that about sixty of the one hundred and thirty-two titles included in the pamphlet could be classified as specialist studies and not for general consumption.

Also, the shyness which Irish publishers display when *it comes to fiction is well evidenced* by the fact that there is only one novel scheduled for publication this season. This is Gill and Macmillan's *Down The Bath Rocks*, a first novel by Patrick O'Connor, who has already made a name for himself in the United States with his plays and short stories.

At that other end of that extreme of one novel stands the large quantity of books coming under the heading of general history which with 54 titles account for just about 41 percent of the total list. And of those again the lion's share is accounted for by the Irish University Press's new "Development of Industrial Society Series". Among the volumes included in this series, which is made up of reprints of contemporary documents and commentories on the social, economic and political upheavals of 19th Century Britain, are Robert Giffen's two volumed *Economic Inquiries and Studies*, Charles Knight's *Passage of a Working Life During Half of a Century* and William Thornton's *On Labour*. Not the sort of thing you will find on your local bookstall, especially with prices averaging around the £12 mark, but they are I suppose handy references for the interested historian or, as the case may be, handsome lining for the walls of American libraries. Another Irish University Press project which will not only interest historians but possibly also the occasional or regular indulger in marijuana (to use one of its more printable names) is the nine volume *Report of the Indian Hemp Commission 1893-1894* an inquiry with the social, economic and medical implications of the use of marijuana and other related drugs. The total cost of all the volumes, which I presume one cannot buy singly is £120.90 and that's enough to blow anybody's mind.

Of the other general history titles on the list, there aren't in my mind any major publications, compared, for example, to last year, when we had Maurice Manning's *The Blueshirts* and John Whyte's *Church and State in Ireland*, both of which came from Gill and Macmillan. The latter's "A History of Irish Catholicism" continues to roll along, and this year we are being presented with three more volumes in the series. Volume 4 covers *The Church Under the Penal Code — Irish Exiles in Catholic Europe;* Volume 5 *Canada — South Africa— South America,* and Volume 6 *Australia — New Zealand*. Among those writing in the series are Arthur Monahan, Patrick O'Farrell and Patrick Corish.

Gill and Macmillan will also be bringing out Owen Dudley Edwards' study of *James Connolly, The Mind of an Activist*, a study which has been wanting for some years; as well as two volumes by Brian Farrell, *Chairman or Chief?* a study of the role of the office of Taoiseach, and *The Founding of Dail Eireann*. Both these



W. B. Yeats

studies form the beginning of a series under the title of "Studies in Irish Political Culture." What would make good complementary reading with these are the Institute of Public Administration's publications, *The Irish Judiciary*, by Paul C, Bartholomew; *Seanad Eireann*, by J. C. Smyth, who has also written *The Houses of the Oireachtas*.

For anyone interested in the history of music and Dublin what should prove to be a very interesting work is Dr. Tom Walsh's *Opera in Dublin, 1705-1798, and its Social Background*, which is to be published by Allen Figgis. Dr. Walsh, of course, is a person who knows his subject well and who as sometime Director of the Wexford Opera Festival has been largely instrumental in the revival of opera in this country.

As an historian Andrew Boyd has an uncanny knack of picking out various parallels between different periods of Irish history. Witness, for example, his *Holy War in Belfast*, which was published last year by the Anvil Press. He has now written another title which Anvil will be publishing later this

Mairtin O Cadhain

month—*A History of Irish Trade Unions*—which covers the period from the 1720s up to the past few years.

One or two volumes which the Irish University Press (or for that matter Allen Figgis) might consider reprinting some time, are the novels of Maria Edgeworth particularly *Castle Rackrent and The Absentee*. (Come to think of it they might also keep the work of Gerald Griffin and William Carleton in mind.) Maria Edgeworth as a seminal influence on people such as Walter Scott and Jane Austen, however, would be of particular interest. Those who would like an introduction to the life and work of this writer should keep an eye out for *Maria Edgeworth* by Patrick Murray which will be coming from the Mercier Press.

For other titles under the heading of literary criticism, one has to go to the Dolmen Press list which has five such volumes. The most important of these are the two which have sprung from centenary celebrations this year, *J. M. Synge Centenary Papers* and *Jack B. Yeats: A Centenary Gathering*. The former which is edited by Maurice Harman of U.C.D. brings together eleven homages to Synge's art and contributions to scholarship by such people as T. R. Henn and Ann Saddlemyer; there are also background articles by Sean O Tuama, Sean O Suilleabhain, Thomas Kilroy and Liam Miller. Roger McHugh, also of U.C.D., edits the Jack B. Yeats volume which more or less takes the same format as the Synge one and includes a homage to the artist by Samuel Beckett.

Yeatsian studies are the dominant theme throughout the Dolmen list with four titles in all. Poetess Kathleen Paine writes on *Yeats, the Tarot and the Golden Dawn* while William Murphy dips into Yeatsian geneaology with *The Yeats Family and the Pollexfens of Sligo*. The other two volumes would make good complementary reading: *A Tower of Polished Black Stones* which contains early versions of Yeats play *The Shadowy Waters*, admirably illustrated by Leonard Baskin and, secondly, *Druid Craft. The Writings of the Shadowy Waters* which has come from the hands of the triumirate of D. R. Clark, G. P. Mayhew and M. J. Sidwell.

Of special interest from Dolmen is some previously unpublished writing by Oliver St. John Gogarty, *Many Lives to Thee*, consisting of letters written to various friends and colleagues between 1902 and 1908. Some of these were written from "Joyce's" Tower at Sandycove (there is a detailed description of the building in one letter) which is, incidentally, now deemed as unsafe by the Dun Laoghaire Corporation and is in danger of falling into complete disrepair unless some action is undertaken.

One heartening development over the past few years has been the publication of philosophical and theological works by Irish authors. Here all the congratulations must go to Gill and Macmillan, who have done an excellent job in tapping the resources

Seán O Riordáin

of the Department of Philosophy at U.C.D. and the Institute of Theology and Philosophy at Milltown Park, The most important philosophy title on their list this year is *Foundations of Theology*, by Philip McShane. For anyone interested in the work of the renowned Jesuit theologian, this work is an excellent guide. It consists of a series of articles selected from papers read at the first International Lonergan Conference which was held in Florida in 1970. Bernard Lonergan, of course, was the main speaker at another Theological Conference held at Milltown Park earlier this year, and it may be that here we have the basis for another volume which would make an interesting sequel to *Foundations in Theology*. The other main philosophical title for this year is *Reason Revisited: The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers*, by Sebastian Samay, an Austrian, who is now lecturing at U.C.D. This, in fact, is the first systematic treatment in English of this German philosophe'rs thought.

It is a sad reflection for a country which officially boasts of some million and a half speakers of varying proficiency in both Irish and English that dual language books have not as yet caught publisher's or the public's imagination. The only such title for the coming year is *The Midnight Court* (or if you prefer it through the 'medium' *Cuirt an Mhean Oiche*), Brian Merriman's satirical poem of the 18th century which is to be published by the Mercier Press. The translator is Patrick Power, a teacher who has already contributed two other titles to the Mercier Press list, *The Story of Anglo-Irish Poetry 1800-1962* and *A Literary History of Ireland*.

The main event on the calendar of publishing in

Dr. Tom Walsh

Irish these days is the selection of the lists of books to be offered to members of An Club Leabhar. It will be an even more important occasion this year, since the Club is not offering two lists, and a choice of books in each, as had been the pattern for some years. There will be a list of five Club choices, for the subscription of £5, and a supplementary list of books which will be available to members at a discount. (Student members can join for 50p, receiving one book for that as well as all the membership benefits.)

The second volume of the memoirs of the late Seán T. Ó Kelly, *Seán T. II*, edited by Padraig Ó Fiannachta, is both Cló Morainn's only selection for this year's Club list, and the only volume it has on hand at present.

Sáirséal agus Dill have the rest of the Club selections, and an interesting list outside that as well. *Linte Liombó*, Seán Ó Ríordáin's new collection, has long been awaited, and a posthumous publication by Pádraic Óg Ó Conaire, *Déirc an Diomhaointis*, will be especially welcomed. Also on the Club list are Diarmuid Ó Súilleabháin's award-winning novel *Maeldún*, and *Dúdhúchas* by Fr. Padraig Ó Máille.

Apart from their Club Leabhar publications, probably the most important work Sáirséal agus Dill have on hand at the moment is two volumes by Máirtín Ó Cadhain, *Litreacha ón nGeibhinn* and *Scéalta agus Aisti*. These should go a long way toward filling out the literary picture we have of this late great writer. *Gan Baiste*, a collection of stories by Tomás Bairéad, and *Safari* by Brian Ó Maoileoin are also on Sáirséal agus Dill's immediate list.

Although they are unrepresented in the Club list, FNT (Foilseacháin Náisiúnta Teoranta) have a respectable list of their own.

In the immediate future *Toraigh na dTonn*, an intimate picture of this remote part of the Donegal Gaeltacht by Eoghan Ó Colm. Later this year *Díolam Próis* will appear; this is a selection by Anraí Mac Giolla Chomhaill of Irish prose between 1450-1850, presented in modern spelling, for the general reader rather than the specialist. That was also Pádraig de Barra's aim in preparing *Imeacht na nIarlaí*, by Tadhg Ó Cianáin, a contemporary account of the Flight of the Earls, written in Rome in 1609.

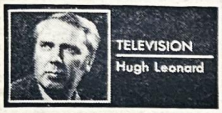
An Clóchomhar start the year well with a collection of essays by one of the best-known figures on the Irish literary scene, Críostóir Mac Aonghusa. Entitled *O Ros Muc go Rosduv*, it runs the gamut from literary essays to political ditto, with pen-portraits thrown in. Two collections of poetry will also appear soon from this company, *Ceantair Shamhalta* by Fr. Padraig Ó Croiligh, and *Fíon as Seithí Oir*, by Bro. Liam F. Prút.

As far as I am concerned, one of the most significant volumes, and certainly the most interesting poetry volume, to be published this season is *Zone*, Samuel Beckett's translations of poems by Guillaime Apollimaire, which will be coming from the Dolmen Press. The doldrums which Irish publishing existed in up to a short while ago led to the virtual "emigration" of many of our best writers to English publishing houses. The publication of *Zone* hopefully is an indication of change in this situation and the beginning of a general return to the fold.

The greatest quantity of poetry volumes in Ireland come from the small presses. Of these, two are worthy of special mention, Tara Telephone and the New Writers' Press. The former has two main publications for this year: a new edition of the attractively produced poetry magazine, *Cappella*, in which can be found a wide spectrum of work by young Irish poets and *Among the Walls* by Peter Fallon. They will also be producing a series of attractively designed "Broadsides," each featuring one poem by a certain author; the first in its series is Brendan Kennelly's *A Kind of Trust*, The New Writers' Press, who publishes its own poetry magazine, *The Lace Curtain*, the fifth edition of which will be appearing towards the end of this year, and will be an international issue, including poetry and criticism in French, Spanish and English. For a small concern, the N.W.P. has a remarkably large number of poetry volumes scheduled for publication in the forthcoming year. These include *Selected Poems* by Niall Montgomery, *Pentaehedron* by Trevor Joyce and *Selected Poems* by Brian Coffey. Their list also includes a collection of short stories, *Yarns*, by John Jordan, who has also written a prose memoir of Dublin in the early 1950s, which comes under the title of *Haemmorhage* and which will be appearing around November.

Art Cinema Music Theatre

CANNED FODDER



SOMEWHERE IN RTE there is a little man, or little men, whose hapless task it is to buy canned programmes — hapless, because television is unique in that it is the only fodder-producing industry where the most rancid meat comes in tins. It is inevitable, due to a combination of economics and waste, that less than a third of the RTE output is home-cured: and much of *that* consists of clerical gentlemen doing nixers, weather-prophets and sports readers with their prandial cabbage still moist on their dewlaps, and Mr. Mitchell reading the news as if in terror of being contradicted. A rough survey shows that out of a week's viewing, less than eleven hours *originated at Montrose; old films accounted for six hours,* British programmes for seven, and the balance — a whopping fourteen hours of it — was American. Leaving our domestic output aside for the moment, a few words are merited on the subject of the *exotica* which are being shoved down our throats in the guise of stable diet.

American television is controlled, not by the networks, but by the advertising industry. The function of a particular programme is to sell a commodity; quality is irrelevant. It is geared towards a mass audience so reactionary as to make the inhaibtants of Fermoy seem like hippies by comparison. (It is not so very long ago that all reference to the gas ovens at Auschwitz were removed from a documentary film concerning the Hitler regime, because the sponsors were a gas company.) Viewers must be cossetted with cliches: they may not be stimulated, shocked, frightened, moved to tears, or even laughter, lest they give the frequent commercials less than their rapt attention—even the fitfully inventive *Star Trek* was cancelled as being too intellectual for popular tastes (although I for one would not miss that glorious split infinitive at the beginning of each programme for a whole wagonload of Kevin O'Kellys apologising for a "shite slake of the camera.")

A brief glance at a few of the programmes imported by RTE may be instructive:

Nanny and the Professor is the archetype of American domestic comedy. A blatant steal from *Mary Poppins*, it features a gingham Valhalla inhabited by cute kids, a cuddly dog and a befuddled *pater familias* in the best tradition of the American emasculated male. Even the mildest facial grimace is greeted by a crescendo of canned laughter so uncontrolled that one would think that Paisley had just died.

Along Came Bronson: a kind of *Lousy Rider*. In every episode the pitifully tongue-tied hero is seen reading a book in an attempt to solicit the approval of the over-12s.

The Virginian — now refurbished as *The Men from Shiloh*, and just as grisly — features a hero who has not changed his shirt or his facial expression in several years, and a sheriff who studied — but not much — under Stanislavsky. This taurine *faeces* takes 75 minutes to say half as much as did a Charles Starrett 56-minute quickie thirty years ago.

Ironside — a tribute to the embalmer's art (there are reputed to be three people in Co. Clare who actually believe that Raymond Burr is alive.)

The Odd Couple and *Barefoot in the Park* are at least wittily written, although the racial patronage implicit in the latter is calculated to make even Enoch Powell gag over his water-melon.

The question is begged: is the little man in RTE who purchases this junk catering to his own tastes or trying to predict ours? It might be argued that he is choosing the best from a bad lot; but why is there this driving compulsion to equate entertainment with worthlessness? It is a quaint snobbery of RTE's that they go to England for their pop-culture *(Maugham, Ivanhoe, Elizabeth R.)*, and choose to ignore the fact that the British networks, too, cater for a mass audience. One episode of *Private Eye* is worth a dozen *Hawaii Eyes;* and while *Dad's Army, The World of Wooster* and *The Morecambe and Wise Show* may not be earthshakers, neither are they excrescences in the tradition of *Green Acres*. Also, in the ITV and B.B.C. libraries there is the cream of contemporary drama, available and waiting (last year on RTE I saw a play called *Small Fish Are Sweet* which was recorded for ABC-TV . . . well, would you believe fourteen years ago?).

Perhaps that little man who buys programmes for RTE should start watching television . . . ?

Hilton Edwards in 'Heartbreak House'.

THE GATE REGAINED?

Andrew Ganly

Micheal MacLiammoir in 'The Signalman's Apprentice'.

AN IRREVERENT FRENCH play by one of the modern masters of the Comedy of Manners; a major Shaw; MacLiammoir at his greatest; Shakespeare's most lyrical tragedy; a new play by an Irish writer, experienced in working for the air; a near-contemporary American play out of "Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolfe."

This should have been a programme to delight Dublin audiences; those of us who have followed Hilton Edwards and Micheal MacLiammoir down the years; those young people who have never seen a Shakespeare play, those who are bored by hearing of the glories of the past and the tapestries woven out of the Peacock's shoestrings. And yet—the season has been a little sad. It has failed to live up to our golden memories; or to give understanding to the young of the richness which they never knew. In Dublin Edwards-Mac Liammoir gave us great theatre, great plays often greatly done (and by that I do not mean flawlessly). Their genius transcended the shortcomings of stage and cast.

The Government has done for their Gate theatre what it did for Yeats' Abbey Theatre—but it should have been done ten, fifteen, twenty years ago. The Abbey had heirs despite its Board of Guardians. Where are the heirs to the Gate? In this first new season there are none apparent. We hoped to see young actors, designers, directors training under the great masters of their craft in Ireland, training to carry on a royal tradition. Amongst those we have seen at work there have been many of considerable merit, but it is hard to see them as heirs presumptive.

Without disrespect to the other companies who will occupy the Gate for half the year, is the Kingdom of Hilton and Michael to be abandoned, to be yielded by default? It is *they* who must find their successors and let them be seen to be in direct line, otherwise when the partnership ends they will leave behind them a playhouse only.

Why was the season, in spite of the brilliance, a little sad? Initially, for the lack of long-term planning. Then, in the opening play, Micheal MacLiammoir gave a bravura performance in a part for which he was not suited by temperament or age. In spite of a heavy cold, which at the end of two weeks' heroism developed into pneumonia and prematurely ended the run. It was much too long and should have been drastically cut before the first night. Some questioned the merits of this Anouilh, but did it not provide an occasion for total theatricality, giving not a seed potato for life or social comment?

In "Heartbreak House", Hilton gave one of his great performances and made us realise how much we miss him when he is not playing. The cast was good, with a couple of disastrously bad exceptions, and yet the public did not pack the house, so that a planned five weeks' run ended after four. Was it Shaw, or this Shaw play, or the production or the public? Hindsight suggests the choice of this Shaw play was not perhaps the happiest—but how wonderful to have seen it!

For one week Micheal MacLiammoir returned with his masterpiece, "The Importance of Being Oscar," and delighted his capacity audiences. It was fitting that the new Gate should see our greatest actor in his greatest creation in which he has made his name and that of the Gate world famous. It was certainly the happiest week of the season.

Romeo and Juliet was enormously enjoyable because it was by Shakespeare and it was so long since we have seen any of his plays in Dublin. But in spite of its merits, the evening was very disappointing. Frank Grimes, as Romeo, is an actor of deep sensibility, but the part needs the voice of an opera singer and all his passion could not make him sing. Sorcha Cusack was brave and winsome as Juliet, but she could not summon tragedy from the deeps of love.

It is always courageous to risk a new play. Plays that seem certain of success up to the dress rehearsal may fail glumly on the first night. "The Signalman's Apprentice' had a good, an original idea about an hour long. It might have been excellent on television. It probably will be. As a full-length play on the stage the limit of elasticity was passed and it became limp, further sagging in production under a weight of business it could not carry. Hilton and Micheal played most beautifully to each other, but Eamonn Morrisey lacked inner menace, that quality we have come to call Pinteresque. Without this the play lost its cutting edge, was blunted. Yes, of course, its right to try a new play by an Irishman, but sad it should not have been a success. It was kept on for four weeks.

"Slow Dance on the Killing Ground" was undoubtedly the best acted play of the season, its three characters giving exquisitely contrasted performances, the direction was excellent, the business always having purpose, but the response of the public was wretched. Perhaps the play seemed over long, the dialogue too involved and Neville Aurelius, brought over from London, was hard to follow. It had been well received elsewhere and it was important that we should see an example of contemporary American Theatre. But basically, in spite of its qualities, the play lacked audience appeal in Dublin. This was a very pardonable misjudgment.

"The Importance of Being Earnest" packed the Gate for the four last weeks of the season. It is a gloriously outrageous play, containing some of the wittiest dialogue ever written. It is interesting to re-see the play now and to realise how much to its period it belongs. Nowadays wit is starkly economical, even at its sickest, consisting of a single deadly stab, whereas to Wilde's most penetrating thrusts there is an elaboration of stylistic flourishing before the point goes in. These put "The Importance" into the Rococo period. The many young people who had never seen the play revelled in its wit, while those of us who had seen it before delighted in its forgotten convolutions. It is undoubtedly one of the greatest pieces of pure theatre ever written.

The casting was far from perfect, and the men's clothes lacked the elegance of fashion, but it was a perfect choice to end the first season at the new Gate.

It had been planned to put on five plays for the six months season, hoping to get five weeks out of each, with Micheal MacLiammoir's "Importance of Being Oscar" to fill a week in the event of a partial failure. The whole season was disrupted, however, by Micheal's illness after two packed weeks. Marie Keane's "Soft Morning City" was brought in from the Player Wills Theatre and then "Mr. Joyce is Leaving Paris" was transferred from the Eblana to fill the gap before "Heartbreak House" could be ready. Later "Go Where Glory Waits Thee" came from Castletown for two weeks when "Romeo" failed to run for as long as expected.

In their next eagerly-awaited season, I hope Hilton and Michael will collect a permanent company round themselves, with young designers and young assistant directors, whom they will train to carry on the Gate tradition. It is essential that our talented younger actors should be stabilised into a team. Whatever views or hopes Edwards-MacLiammoir may have about their immortality in the next world, that is the only way they can achieve it in this world. Otherwise they will leave not a wrack behind them.

Andrew Ganly is author of "The Dear Queen," "The Cursing Fields" and other plays.

"Cock," by Sean Adamson, at the Oireachtas exhibition in T.C.D.

Robert Ballagh with his painting, James Connolly, which won the Arts Council Douglas Hyde medal.

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JACK B. YEATS AND OIREACHTAS '71

LET US overlook the wildly distracting shiny brocade of the National Gallery's Irish rooms, whose dazzling medallionettes practically force the pictures off the wall, and try to evaluate Jack B. Yeats as a twentieth-century painter. To stumble straight away: he is only a twientieth century painter in that he has lived between 1900 and 1957; his art does not belong to the age in the sense that the art of Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone does; in the sense that the visual art of the twentieth century speaks by its own means and does not rely on literature, or historical pageant, or drama. The art of Jack B. Yeats is essentially literature; more precisely, it is dramatic poetry. To see how literary it is, one has only to compare it with the art of a supremely poetic painter like Rothko, who expresses his profound poetry by purely visual means.

Yeats sees man as a heroic figure, so often valiantly silhouetted against huge skies or landscapes, pitted against fate and the elements, not in a tragic or desperate manner but philosophically, even humourously. I have a vision of my six-year-old daughter, last summer, indomitably riding her bicycle on a bog road in Kerry, a tiny figure with hair streaming behind her, isolated against a vast panorama of mountain and high sky. This is the art of Jack Yeats, but he could never, for example, paint a woman, when one thinks of how Matisse paints women. His painting technique is in the same heroic manner, wild wind-blown paint, poetically slashed on to the canvas, and this unity of manner and preoccupation gives his art the authority and strength which it has. One wishes, all the same, (and this may seem *ingrat* in the face of such a widely-gathered exhibition) that he had worked as hard as his brother. For his best painting is not as good as his brother's best poetry. There is no doubt that we are, still, in the shadow of literature. One has only to imagine what it might have been like if Ireland had produced a painter of the audacity and weight of Joyce. Meanwhile let us be thankful for Joyce.

The Oireachtas second exhibition in Trinity is not quite the same stunning surprise as last year, but nevertheless has some fine things in it. Robert Ballagh shows two purely political works, a four-part head of James Connolly and a Study for a Monument to Irish Political Prisoners. The latter, particularly, is a most effective idea which would apply to political prisoners anywhere, but it is quite pointless showing it in a small art exhibition. It should immediately be enlarged to the size of an advertisment hoarding and put up all over London to protest against internment, and indeed extend it to Washington, New York, and major European cities. All these political works of Robert Ballagh should be *used*. They are not merely to be quietly admired in an art gallery. Politicians, however, are notoriously useless in appreciating the potential of art, particularly of serious art. Even Robert Ballagh's protagonists appreciate him for his correct politics, not for the quality of his art.

F. E. McWilliam, the Belfast sculptor, is the guest artist at the Oireachtas and his small bronze figures are delightful. He has used an amusing technique whereby he suddenly switches from three to two-dimensions, so that a figure which is in the round at the back is incised on a flat plane at the front. They are a little like Picasso's sheet metal folded sculptures which also have the faces simply drawn on them. Picasso has gone further and reduced the figures altogether to two dimensions, so that by this reduction and synthesis they are stronger and more powerful than McWilliam's. His, however, are sophisticated, joky and charming.

Michael Farrell has developed his Pressé Series into a three-dimensional cut-out; Charles Brady, in a small painting "Sculptor's Envelope", in grey and black, has suddenly focussed his many years' search for a telling conveyor of his sensibilities. Camille Souter, in "Just outside Mullingar" crystallises in vivid greens and distant chimneys the common Irish scene of town in country. Oisin Kelly's bouquet of bannisters is a nice bunch of carpentry and Frank Lee-Cooper has painted a striking op painting of a violet circle on a red ground, with a small cluster of yellow dots at the centre, the circle cracked down the middle by a thin jagged blue line.

I must apologise for increasingly brief reviews of exhibitions until Rosc 71 and the associated exhibitions open at the end of October. Being a founder member of Rosc, I must declare my interest, but not having been involved in the actual selection of any of the exhibitions, while it might be invidious to review them, I think I could in fairness at least discuss those aspects of them which interest me particularly.

THE IRISH FILM SOCIETY IN THE '70's.

CINEMA
Conor Sweeney

A LULL in the film front, coinciding with the publication of the programmes of the Irish Film Society for 1971/'72, provides an opportunity for a critical look at the functioning of the Society in the Seventies.

The public image of the Film Society tends, I imagine, to waver between two extremes. According to one view, the members are an erudite clique of cinema addicts, meeting in draughty halls with uncomfortable wooden benches to view long and boring documentary films about such subjects as growing jute in the Ganges delta. At the other extreme, and this is usually a jaundiced viewpoint, they form a kind of secret society whose members spend Saturday afternoons looking at sophisticated sex films that are not available to the general public.

That the Film Society has survived the indifference of the public and the scorn of the philistines in our midst, who can always be trusted to stab in the back any proponents of cultural enlightenment, is a triumph for a band of dedicated people. This forth-coming season is the 36th, and I think it is now time to re-assess the aims and function of the Society against the background of the film scene here in Ireland and also in Britain.

Despite the escalating competition from television, Club Cinemas, and the fast-multiplying video cassettes, the Film Societies in Britain were never healthier. Ten years ago the total membership was 80,000; today it is over 120,000. Five years ago there were 500 Film Societies in Britain; now more than 740 are affiliated to the British Federation of Film Societies.

There is an ever-increasing interest in screen media, and it is apparent that, with the greater scope most people have for leisure, their entertainment, educational and cultural needs will be increasingly served by film.

Television and the local cinemas will continue to cater for the mass audiences with mass tastes, and present trends suggest that minority needs will be met by specialised art cinemas, video casettes, Film Societies and Regional Film Theatres. The spread of Regional Film Theatres in Britain has been quite remarkable. As of now there are 37 scattered all over Britain, with a total membership of over 50,000, ranging from 6,000 members in Manchester to as tiny a number as 130 in Petworth.

These Regional Theatres are open to the public and are intended to serve a wider membership than the local Film Society, on a bigger and more professional scale. In some areas local Film Societies are being converted into Regional Theatres equipped with first-class technical facilities. Local Authorities provide the money to establish the theatre, and the British Film Institute matches their investment £ for £—the amount subscribed by Local Authorities varies usually from £500 to £1,500 a year.

How does the situation in this country compare? While the Film Societies are flourishing in Britain, the membership figure for the Irish Film Society shows a different trend. Taking the past five years, 1966 to 1970, the membership of the Society's A Programme declined from 1,701 to 993: at the same time the total membership of the other 18 branches in the provinces, in the universities, etc., dropped from 3,160 to 2,154.

With the burgeoning of specialised cinemas in Dublin the kind of film formerly available to cineastes through the Film Society is now provided by the Academy, the International, the Curzon, the Astor and Adelphi 3. Even television has begun to cater for minority tastes: R.T.Es Cineclub, the special seasons on B.B.C. 2, the more frequent appearance of offbeat or formerly neglected films on all channels.

Some of these difficulties are adverted to in the hon. secretary's report on the activities of last season. The availability of suitable films is rapidly reaching crisis point, and the A Programme just announced for the present season indicates some of the pressures on the Society. With regard to the type of film of interest to the members the report goes on: "Many interesting new films are not being bought for distribution by British firms. Since this may mean that prints subtitled in English are not made, it is a development which could affect our supply of contemporary films for the A Programme . . . We may have to explore the possibility of direct importation of films from their countries of origin, but this would pose many difficulties." Personally, what with the limited funds available, I think that this scheme is just not on, and that the Society will have to consider other means.

It will mean the end of the A Programme as it is constituted at present, and I'm sure the Society officers fully realise this. Fortunately, the success of the reformed B Programme with its Special Seasons points the way to the future. The A Programme can no longer compete successfully with the commercial art houses in the city (the provinces may have to be considered separately): the Special Seasons should henceforth be the main attraction for members, and there should be minimal difficulty with the supply of films. To facilitate members who might wish to give greater participation in the activities of the Society the new plan of a uniform low rate subscription (50p) for membership is a step in the right direction.

Any major realignment of the A Programme will inevitably involve a reconsideration of the State Theatre, Phibsboro, in the new context. According to the report a sub-committee was set up during the past year to investigate the possibility of acquiring or renting premises which, as well as providing office accommodation, would allow the establishment of a National Film Theatre. This must be the aim from now on. With a National Film Theatre the Film Society can then cater for the needs of the public whose interests it serves. It can then lend a sense of occasion to its presentations, it can offer special showings at times that suit members best, lectures, symposiums, exhibitions of cinematic materials, much more detailed programme notes, brochures and possibly a house magazine (as of yore). It would be part of its function to expand the teaching of film and television in our schools where the failure to provide such guidance is a short-sighted policy by our education authorities (Tyneside Film Theatre caters for 90 schools in the area, serving some 90,000 students between the ages of 13-16).

Where is the money to come from? The Arts Council is an obvious source in view of the work that such a Film Theatre would be doing for the nation. The Film Industry Bill does not envisage a National Film Theatre: the nearest it gets to the project is the suggestion that a Film Archive be established, "equipped with exhibition facilities of modest scope," as the Huston Committee suggested. In 1969, when the National Film Board legislation was impending the Film Society pointed out to the Minister concerned that the setting up of the NFB did not remove the necessity of help from the Arts Council. If the Government is not prepared to support a National Film Theatre then all that's left is an appeal to commercial bodies to sponsor the establishment and running of the Theatre—in Britain the John Player Organisation has been sponsoring the lectures at the NFT for some years now.

All the Society's zeal and determination must be canalised into a campaign for a National Film Theatre, or a theatre of its own if sufficient monetary support is not forthcoming. If it succeeds the prospects for the future of the Society are exhilarating; but if it fails, then the future of the Irish Film Society is bleak indeed.

NEWS IN THE ARTS
Terry Kelleher

NEXT WEEK, Saturday, 16th October, to be exact, should or at least could be an important day for the Abbey. On that date the A.G.M. of Abbey directors and shareholders is due to take place, and the most important item of business will be the selection of a new member for the board of directors. Each year the term of office of one of the board members expires and he can (and inevitably does) offer himself for renomination by his fellow board members. The man who holds centre stage this time is **Gabriel Fallon,** who has served continuously since 1959, but what makes this year's meeting an interesting one is that it will only be the second time that the renomination of a board member will be challenged. And the challenger for the second time is shareholder **Charles McCarthy.**

As I explained in a June issue, the composition of votes held by the shareholders, directors and Minister for Finance makes any opposition from the shareholders virtually impossible. Briefly, the Minister holds two hunderd and fifty shares, the five directors two hundred each and the twenty-five shareholders, thirty each. If you do your sums carefully you will appreciate that the Board, even without the Minister's support (which would be unlikely, since he has nominated two of its members) can outvote the shareholders by 1,000 to 750 votes. Add to this the Minister's votes and the fact that the geographically-scattered shareholders can never manage a full muster, and the result should be something in the order of 1,250 to perhaps 540 votes. If you still think that the challenger has a fighting chance, remember that in the unlikely event of a deadlock, the Chairman (one of the directors, naturally) has a casting vote.

The fact is that it is firstly, Gabriel Fallon and, secondly, his fellow directors who will decide whether Gabriel Fallon is to continue to sit on the Board. I don't suppose it is possible that the judgment of his peers will be influenced by the fact that in the next four years each of them in turn will be in the hot-seat themselves?

Another important Abbey date — the announcement of **Hugh Hunt's** successor as Artistic Director should follow closely on the A.G.M. The field has been narrowed to five; four Irish, one English, four male, one female.

●

AND ANOTHER event which should have some importance but inevitably does not, is the publication of the Arts Council annual report, which is identical in content and form and lack of information to the annual reports that have preceded it. The criticisms of last year remain; only a brief summary of the annual expenditure (£76,304); few details of the extent of sponsorship; the continuing bias towards the visual arts, and most important, no policy statement, no review of the year, not even an introduction. Not really worth writing about anymore.

●

A NUMBER of Irish students and graduates living in Cambridge, Massachussetts, are responsible for the publication of a very excellent poetry quarterly, called Ploughshares, which is launched this month, price 75p or $2.00. One of the co-Editors is **Peter O'Malley,** who studied music at U.C.D. and is now preparing a Ph.D. at Harvard. While at U.C.D. he composed and arranged the music for the award-winning "Tom Paine," by **Paul Foster; David Baxter's** "Will Somebody Please Say Something?" produced last year at the Eblana and the R.T.E. Children's series, **Brogeen.** He has just collaborated on a new Mass with Irish poet **Desmond O'Grady.** Among the contributors are **Ted Berigan, Anselm Hollo, Norman Shapiro, George Kimbell,** and from this side of the Atlantic, **Hugh Maxton, Tom Tessier,** who has two plays, "Rose In The Fisted Glove" and "Is Paul McCartney Dead?" scheduled for production in the Peacock this autumn, **Hayden Murphy** and **Thomas Redshaw.** Manuscripts for Ploughshares No. 2, accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope should be sent to Box 529, Cambridge, Mass. 02139, or if you are in the neighbourhood, call in to the main editorial meeting-place which is "The Plough and The Stars," on the corner of Mass Avenue and Hancock Street, which serves an excellent pint of Guinness or draught Harp.

●

THE 36th SEASON of the Irish Film Society begins on October 16th with the eight-film main programme shown at the State Theatre, Phibsborough, on Saturday afternoons at 3 p.m. The first film is the Swedish, Hugo and Josefin directed by **Kjell Grede** and this is followed a fortnight later by **Claude Chabrol's** Que la Bete Meure. Other films in the programme are a relatively unknown **Godard** made in 1963, and, from Japan, The Boy, directed by **Nagisa Oshima,** an from Germany "Artists at the top of the Big Top: Disorientated," directed by **Alexander Kluge,** who made "Yesterday Girl." The cost of this programme is £3, plus the 50p membership fee. The number of special seasons, which are shown in the Player Wills Theatre on Tuesdays at 8 p.m., have this year been increased from four to five. The **Arthur Penn** season includes Alice's Restaurant and a documentary on Penn himself. There is a **Marx Brothers** season which has five films made between the years 1929 and 1933, and the American Musicals season includes two films by **Vincente Minelli**—American in Paris and Bandwagon, Gold Diggers of 1933, Silk Stockings, and the **Gene Kelly/Stanley Donen** Singing in the Rain. Two more directors, **Francois Truffaut** and **Roman Polanski,** have their own seasons, comprising nine films, though it must be pointed out that at least four of them have been shown commercially in Dublin within the past eighteen months. For an assessment of the Film Society's role as an institution see **Conor Sweeney** in the current issue.

●

FOR NINE DAYS, from October 12th, **Roland Jacquareloo's** production of Police, by Polish playwright **Slamoni Mrozeks** will be staged at the Players Theatre, No. 4 Trinity College, Dublin. This is the first time one of his plays has been performed in Ireland, though the Royal Shakespeare Company staged another of his pieces, Tango, in London a few years ago. The play is apparently set in a mythical police state—why always mythical, surely the world abounds in plenty of real live examples?—and concerns the last remaining opponent of the regime, who threatens the status quo by declaring his loyalty. Without an opposition, the continuing existence of the police force is endangered. In this respect the theme of the play suggests a close parallel with recent events in Ireland; at the cessation of IRA activities in the early sixties, our Special Branch became practically obsolete, so they promptly conjured up the threat of the Red Menace, and spent happy hours photographing and sometimes clobbering students and 'The New Left.'

The production is designed by **Peter Avery** and includes **Frank Kelly, Tom Hickey, Tom Irwin, Alan Devlin** and **Aine Ni Mhuire** in the cast. There are previews on Sunday and Monday the 10th and 11th.

AN OBJECT lesson in how to prepare and present an art catalogue is given by the Independent Artists, whose annual exhibition runs in the *Project Gallery until October* 23rd. The catalogue which is simply and clearly laid-out includes three short essays by three of the exhibitors: **John Behan** on the Artist and Society, **Francis Hall** on Architecture — The Hidden Art and Technology and Art by **Jim Casey.** All credit to the catalogue designer, **Michael Kane** who has two guaches in the exhibition.

I'm told that the catalogue for the **Jack B. Yeats** exhibition at the National Gallery is a more lavish production but that there is one omission. One of the paintings is not listed because it has been loaned by H.M. the Queen (of England) and this would make it susceptible to hijacking (if you will excuse my feeble pun) by "an illegal organisation." But despite the amount of money which has been 'liberated' in the recent bank robberies, I somehow doubt if any 'illegal organisation' could have afforded to pay two quid for the catalogue.

REMINDERS: Jack Cudworth has an exhibition at the Davis Gallery, **Laura Vecchi** at the Kenny Art Gallery, Galway. **Richard Hulsenbeck** lectures on Dada. Or The Meaning of Chaos, at the German Cultural Institute, 37 Merrion Square, at 8 p.m. on October 18th. Limerick Music Association show the film of Mozart's Il Seraglio on Friday, October 22nd, and Ludwig von Beethoven, on Friday, October 29th, both at 8 p.m., both at the Player-Wills Theatre, South Circular Road.

JOHN BECKETT: PHILOSOPHER AND MUSICIAN

JOHN BECKETT bears a physical resemblance to Jonathan Swift and to J. S. Bach, and he further resembles both men in that like Swift he has no time at all for fools, and like Bach he cherishes his friends with warmth and loyalty. Never once during a two-hour conversation over lunch recently did he start a sentence "Of course he's a very old friend of mine but . . ." Charity marks all his conversation coupled with gratitude to anyone who ever did him a good turn.

He remembers E. J. Moeran with particular affection because Moeran helped him greatly as a student. He thinks of Michael Bowles very kindly because it was Bowles who introduced him to Sibelius. He had no sooner made this observation to me than the door-bell rang and there on the step was Bowles attired in a top hat, a white tie and tails and I must say that I felt like the heroine of a de Vere White novel. If the white rabbit and the Duchess had turned up as well I would not have been surprised, and I think that Beckett must have had the zaniest lunch of his career. Bowles had dropped in on the way to his nieces wedding and was not as I had at first thought on his way to next year's Ascot.

Now that John Beckett has returned to Dublin to take up a post teaching harpsichord and piano at the R.I.A.M. others as well as myself hope that his presence will mark a new phase in the manner in which music is made in this city. For those who think of Beckett in terms of the baroque period in music it may come as a surprise to learn that he has an obsession with Mahler. Of course with Mahler there can be no half measures, either you worship at the shrine or you cannot abide him at all. Inside every true Mahlerian there lurks a debunker, a cynic, a romantic, a sentimentalist fighting for air with a firerce sense of the ridiculous and the ironic. It is therefore not as surprising as it once might have appeared to find an exponent of the music of the 15th and 16th centuries in the Mahler camp because these periods like our own times of political and religious upheaval, and saw the movements of vast populations as well as the struggle of personalities endeavouring to preserve their identities in spite of the trends.

What is perhaps not so easy is to reconcile all this with his admiration for Franz Kafka whom he regards as the most important writer of this century, but from the first cousin of Sam Beckett perhaps it is not surprising at all. In John Beckett there is a built-in core of precision, and an implacable passion for the truth. One is reminded of the Kafka prisoner who asks for amirror to be installed in his cell, and of the kindly governor who makes available not one but several mirrors thereby allowing the prisoner to come face to face with a wealth of detail. He is no longer looking at empty space but can see almost with pedantry the curve of every linement. Ben Kiely once wrote perceptively of Kafka that it was impossible to know whether his God came down from the clouds or up from the basement and whether Kafka was a symbolist or an allegorist. With John Beckett there is similar confusion because he might just as well have been a philosopher as a musician. Indeed I might venture to describe him as both.

To be an admirer of Mahler and Kafka should not call for comment; it is a more logical affinity than say Mahler — Mann or Mahler—Joyce because Kafkas contribution to literature was achieved without the distortion of language as in Joyce. This can also be said of Mahler's contribution to music provided that mere gigantiism is not confused with distortion. A sentence which Kafka wrote in a letter is worth quoting in this context: "I am separated from all things by a hollow space, and I do not even reach to its boundaries." This could have been written by Mahler with equal appropriateness.

Beckett is interested in voices, and his experience with singers was similiar to that of Professor Frank Harrison. Both men work in the same period and both are concerned to bring this early music out of the museum, and into the concert hall but they insist on it being performed in as authentic a manner as possible. Jantina Noorman who sings with Musica Reservata can reproduce the open chest no holds barred style of singing necessary for the period, but few other singers have the mental or vocal equipment to apply this technique with success. The only time during our conversation when Beckett allowed himself a slight acidity was when he spoke about singers.

One singer for whom he has total admiration though is Frank Patterson. He thinks Patterson's voice is of a quite exceptional beauty and that Patterson himself is a man of a most unusual talent. He spoke also in the most compelling way of his friend and colleague Michael Morrow who is the director of Musica Reservata. Morrow does all the necessary research and according to Beckett is the guiding spirit of the group. Nevertheless Reservata has achieved considerable stature in the large pond of London music, and this is due I think myself to Beckett's perfectionism.

Of his first cousin Sam, John spoke with affection, and he has many happy memories of him talking, singing, swimming and playing piano duets in the family home in Greystones. Other Irish writers whom he admires are Joyce, Yeats and Synge. Those who were fortunate enough to be present on that occasion earlier in the year in Dublin Castle will remember the very excellent little concert of Synge's music which Beckett and five or six others put on for our entertainment. I felt then, and still do that it was a great pity that it was not made available to a wider public who hear and see little enough of programmes executed with elegance and distinction.

Beckett has always thought very highly of Frederick May, and he feels that had May enjoyed better and more stable health he would by now have a fairly considerable reputation. He reminded me of a series which the B.B.C. did of chamber-music ranging from 1856 to 1970 in which Frederick May's String Quartet had an honoured place. I must say that I myself find it ironical that when the late R.T.E. Quartet were being recorded for commercial purposes recently by the New Irish Recording Company Frederick May was not included. The R.T.E.Q. have his quartet in their repertoire and his exclusion is hard to explain away. There is some consolation in the news that thanks to Beckett the Aeolian Quartet are very impressed with this and are considering takng it in to their permanent repertoire and they will almost certainly play it on their next visit to Dublin.

Beckett feels that there must as he puts it be an Irish genius standing at the door waiting for someone to open it, and he adds wryly that at one stage he thought it might have been himself. His recipe for the encouragement of such a genius would be to put him in charge of the mast at Kippure.

His interest in folk and trad is as great as his interest in baroque music, but in no circumstances would he agree with me that a vocational school was a good place to encourage this sort of talent. He thinks it should grow out of its environment but when there are no humans left in the environment what do you do? On the subject of avant-garde and aleatory music we only barely touched, and with his usual tolerance he said that he found it difficult himself but that the young people appeared to take it all in their stride. I am looking forward to hearing Ligeti's piece, "Atmospheres," in the Gaiety during the Public Concert Season. It has had the London critics literally on their ears on more than one occasion recently. Words have had to be eaten at an astonishing rate.

John Beckett.

Beckett would like to see the R.T.E.S.O. having to fight for its existence and public in the way that N.I.C.O. has and he would also like occasionally to conduct the Symphony Orchestra — it would make a nice change for the orchestra. He is astonished to find that the Concert Hall is still a subject for discussion as it was when he and Patrick Delany were going hammer and tongs in the Bell in the early fifties. He thinks congenial surroundings are imperative for any orchestra and no one in his senses would describe the Francis Xaviour Hall as congenial. Beckett's description of the sound in the Gaiety which the orchestra makes is worth repeating "like a ceilidhe band when the pianist doesn't turn up," but I have heard more trenchant criticism which would be too vulgar to repeat in these pages.

Now that this distinguished scholar and musician has returned to live amongst us once more could we perhaps give him his due or must Joyce's telling phrase be repeated yet again that "Ireland is the sow that eats her own farrow."

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NEXT TO GODLINESS

Bernard Share

SHRDLU

I HAVE somewhere an old Pan Am World Guide, issued in the days when trundling Connies used to take thirteen hours to totter across the Atlantic, which presented our planet—the "free" part of it, that is (though the airline, greatly daring for the time, included a few words on Russia), in terms of Drug Stores and laundry facilities. They would apologize for the annoying habit evinced by the former for disguising themselves as "Chemists' Shops" in certain unregenerate territories, and for their failure to provide a soda fountain (I had a wonderful pyrotechnical vision of this when young, about the time I was convinced that the Strand in London was nothing but miles of sand). About the laundry facilities they were more fatalistically resigned, clearly quite convinced that nothing, anywhere, would ever live up to the great American sanitised dream.

And no more it does. I recently spent a morning in Vienna trying to get some pants cleaned through the medium of German. Vienna is a big city, and as these things go, a pretty clean city. And I now know why.

My first step was to ask a saturnine individual behind the desk in the hotel. Yes, he said, there was a washery round the corner, not a schnitzel-throw away. I circled the block, trousers pressed to bosom, and at the second time round found it, a steamy den in which a solid phalanx of muscular ladies seemed to be stewing very old pudding-cloths—perhaps for goulash soup. My fragile German fragmented completely in front of the captain of the band. I waved the trousers at her abjectly.

She regarded them with great suspicion, fingering the fake linen as if I was trying to do her out of patrimony.

"One can't wash those", I understood her to say. She made as if to grasp me in a bear hug, then I realised that she was mimicking shrinking motions.

"And anyway", she went on (yes, I understand the language better than I don't speak it), "you haven't got five kilos.

I was feeling among my loose change for the five kilos when I recalled that they were not divisions of an Austrian schilling. I queried her, to the best of my ability.

She pointed to a large price list. It started with five kilos and went up by dizzy heights to some platonic concept of washing far above my grasp. I thought for one frenetic moment of tearing off all my clothes to make up the weight, anything to get those damned pants pressed, but another look at the phalanx of stirring females made me pause to consider that I might be biting off more than I could chew.

And anyway (what is the German for anyway, anyway?) said the Lady Captain, as I bitte'd my way out, this is a wascherei. What you want is a Putzerei. With that intuitive linguistic grasp that once earned me the boy scout's interpreter's ɹǝpɹǝɔ 'ɔlɐss ɔɔnoɹ ɔǝpɐq that this must be the local term for a dry cleaners. I set off, in search of same, to another part of the Vienna woods.

If I passed one washing shop I passed the lot. Stout Vienna ladies were rolling in with the five kilos, rolling out again with the equivalent minus the soup ingredients. I didn't dare show my face, let alone my trousers, in one of them. Finally, just as I was about to crawl up the steps of the CTT office, craving shelter and JJ, I found one. In unmistakeable Austrian gothic it proclaimed its trade. I unfurled my trousers and advanced like a matador performing a difficult and delicate *manolete*.

This lady was younger, and inclined to take a kinder view of the fabric of my exiguous garment. Yes, they could be cleaned, dry-cleaned, she admitted. And then she pointed above her head to a sign on the wall. I didn't have to look to know that the price list started at five kilos.

Well, what would you have done? My trousers are before me as I write (logically enough, unless I have my legs on backwards), and a lot of foreign pavement has flowed beneath their bi-furcations since that must be brave, face the world epiphanistic day. Sometime again, I will go out and find some nice, kind lady to take me to the cleaners. Somewhere, that is, where they don't believe that when God made washing he made plenty of it.

FROM BLASTED HEATH

TO BULGARIA

POOR MR. HUNT. He must know it now. When he attempts to produce Shakespeare with the Abbey Company he is like a potter who has been handed peat instead of clay with which to mould his design. Six weeks, two months, a year, is not time enough to train a company in verse speaking or even in the required English. This was not the worst Macbeth I've ever seen. No that crime was committed in the old Abbey theatre in 1934 when the witches were trees and the rest of the cast tied up in sacking as if ready for loading at the North Wall. Macbeth '71 is splendidly mounted with a soaring ominious stage setting by Bronwen Cassin; with the most ingenius sound effects; with specially arranged music score with glorious lighting, with *terrifying fights, coached by Malcolm Ransom, and I must say when* you have to import an Englishman to train Irishmen in fighting you've come to a pretty pass! All, all was there—except Shakespeare.

I never heard such a variety of accents. Macduff had apparently escaped over the border from Belfast, ageing greatly in the process. "An Old Man" and the Doctor were brought *into the business from Kerry,* and the Porter tried everything from Connemara to Ringsend, and messengers and murderers came pouring in from all parts of the world muttering their own patois. It was a regular League of Nations! But what can you do? Unless Irish actors deport themselves to London for five years and train in classical drama it is no use such a resolutely *National* company attempting Shakespeare, or indeed any classical drama. If you adopt chauvinism you must pay the price, or let us be accurate, a highly intelligent sensitive director such as Hugh Hunt may break his heart trying to make do with sow's ears when it comes to such a production as this.

As for the cast; the imported star Ray McAnally is a born Irishman, but he has learned a lot in wider spheres. He has learned to speak good English, move well, and play with style, but he is not up to the majestical conception required for Macbeth. He gave us nothing of a soul in torment. In fact he was more like a stockbroker in deep trouble on "Change". Th. wonderful heartbreaking "tale told by an idiot" was nicely delivered, one heard it all, but one's heart did not break with him. Angela Newman who must be a director's dream so reliable is she, so assured, so word perfect and hardworking, came off better. It certainly was not my conception of Lady Macbeth, (the best I ever saw was Judith Anderson), because Miss Newman is incapable of diffusing that green silvery evil sexuality, the snakelike seductiveness required to seduce the soul as well as the body. Breast puffing is simply not enough. Miss Newman gave us a respectable shrewish middle-class Lady M. and I must say her costumes didn't help. Why was she made up to resemble Ladybird Johnson receiving at the White House? However, to do her justice she enunciated well, she was dignified and she was obviously, to the best of her ability, feeling her rôle. Michael Duffy was miscast as Macduff. He simply could not have masterminded any national movement. One of the few bright spots was Frank Grimes's Malcolm. He spoke his lines with a feeling for the poetry; he moved well and looked like a prince: he is almost purged of Borstal Boy. The worst blot on the production was Lady Macduff's murder. Maire O'Neill as Lady Macduff was simply having *trouble in a supermarket finding the right cereal. Better to* have cut the scene. As for the witches I wish some day a director would have the courage to play them realistically as three dirty, bored, rather clever old farmers' wives attending their quarterly coven (now it's Bingo), which is what they were. However the excellent stage effects helped them in this production. It was a gallant effort by Mr. Hunt and I have to hand him full marks for staging; there was nothing wrong with the direction. Maybe they should have played it in Irish?

To pass from the Blasted Heath to Bulgaria in 1894 is somewhat of a relief. True, war is also raging there but it is, on the surface, a gay lighthearted war and nobody gets hurt, only sleepy, and casualties are off-stage. The most interesting thing about Shaw's "Arms and The Man" now playing at the Gate theatre is the paradoxical duplicity of the characters. No one, he or she, is what they seem. Raina, the heroine underneath the romantical airs and graces, the Lydia, languishing airs and graces, is a hard calculating little realist who knows what she wants and gets it. Louka the rebellious sexy maid servant is potentially the mother of the coming revolution. Seranoff the opera buffo hero is quite happily an ass and deserves to be eaten up by Louka. Only Bluntschli is Bluntschli, a mercenary soldier, a disillusioned realist, a man who knows that war is bloodstained folly, that an army travels on its stomach, in his case chocolate, and is always aware that the Rothschilds won the Battle of Waterloo. But even he is not quite consistent. He too has a streak of romanticism. He returns to have another look at the beautiful Raina. True he is a Swiss but even that prosaic nation love their edelweiss, the white star of the Alps.

The Gate production under Chloe Gibson's direction moves smoothly and one is aware of the love affair between author and director which always brings forth rewards. Miss Gibson loves and understands her Shaw. As she points out in her admirable programme note Shaw always gets over a Shavian message and she is not the one to disregard it. The play indeed is timely. In this comedy Shaw pokes bitter ridicule at the stupid glamourisation of war; the assault on commonsense by gaudy uniforms, the beating of drums and the worship of cardboard heroes. With a few exceptions the cast did Miss Gibson proud. Susan Hallinan was wholly delightful. I cannot imagine a better Raina. She moved beautifully, spoke beautifully and conveyed all the naughtiness, seductiveness and toughness of the charcter and above all when it was required did nothing beautifully. Finnuala O'Shannon, whether it was the director's idea or her own, overdid the Carmen touch, any moment I expected a toreador, but in the passages when she released the rebellion beneath the servant she was excellent. John Franklyn was perfectly cast as Major Petkoff. Peter Maycock as Saranoff, the opera buffo hero was very funny but there was a little too much of Groucho Marx in those twitching eyebrows, the foot trouble and the undulating moustachios. Maurice Good's Bluntschli was admirable though he was somewhat handicapped by being of all things too handsome. Surely the real irony in the play is that Bluntschli should *not* be physically attractive. However it was a pleasure to watch an actor who has learned his craft and practices it with such knowing grace. As Raina's mother, Catherine Petkoff, Blanaid Irvine almost threw the whole production off balance. She overacted mercilessly, threw her hands around as if swatting imaginary flies and took her exits at a gallop. Control is surely necessary here? Pat Nolan's Nicola was at times inaudible and he failed to give us the underlying menace of the prospective gombeen man, who would eventually swallow up all Petkoffs. The sets were excellent and the costumes imaginative and delicate: someone had done rewarding research. The lighting, however, was pedestrian, more variety was needed in Act One, and the sound effects likewise. Some music from the Chocolate Soldier, that Edwardian musical, inspired by the play might have been amusingly interspersed. However, taken all in all, it was a successful début for the Dublin Art Theatre Company Ltd. Thanks are due to them and to Miss Gibson and, oh, I almost forgot —George Bernard Shaw.

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THE 35th Annual General Meeting of the Company was held recently in Dublin, Mr. Eugene O'D. Davy, the Chairman, presided. The following is an extract from his Statement circulated with the Report and Accounts for the year ended April 30th, 1971.

Your Company, last December, acquired the old established business of May Roberts (Ireland) Ltd. which has operated in Ireland since the early years of the century and has an excellent position in the Pharmaceutical Industry. Some rationalisation has been effected already and is showing results.

It is with satisfaction that we report another successful year's trading. Our subsidiary, P. C. Cahill and Company (Cork) Ltd., and our branch at Sligo have shown increased profits, Chem Labs Ltd. has not come up to expectations but, in the current trading period, turnover is expected to show an increase. Our factory at Harmonstown is very busy, while new plant is at present being installed there for additional manufacturing and packaging. During the year arrangements were completed for the construction of new premises at Chapelizod, which will provide facilities for further rationalisation in the group's activities.

Trading profit amounted to £160,314 before deduction of Loan Stock Interest amounting to £6,696, as compared with £135,401 last year. This slightly exceeded the profit forecast of £160,000 in the offer document to May Roberts (Ireland) Ltd. Shareholders. These profit figures do not include any contribution from May Roberts, whose results for the year ended the 31st January, 1971, showed a profit before tax of £75,547, exceeding the forecast figure of £71,000. Our trading results for next year will include those of May Roberts.

RETROSPECTIVE TAXATION

Taxation amounts to £85,316, making the profit after tax £68,302 as against £68,332 for the previous year. The tax liability amounts to 58% of the profits as against 50% last year. This in effect is an increase of 16% in the taxation charge, and puts an additional £12,000 on our tax liability. Furthermore, out of our reserves we have had to provide an extra sum of £18,227 for retrospective taxation in respect of profits earned for two years to the 30th April, 1969, and 1970. The increase in tax for our Company for this year, therefore, amounts to £30,227, and is consequent on taxation legislation introduced in the Autumn Budget, 1970.

In our opinion, the imposition of retrospective taxation on profits for previous years is most regrettable and has to be deplored by those in business who have had to plan ahead some years. It can therefore be seen that, with the high level of taxation, it has become increasingly difficult to put aside adequate sums to meet future capital commitments. In our case, as well as providing for the necessary capital needed for increasing turnover in our Group, we also have had to provide for the building of our new premises.

Your Directors have decided that in future, our financial year will end on the 31st January. This will mean that the next accounts will include only nine months' trading of P. C. Cahills and twelve months of May Roberts.

The Directors have recommended a final dividend of 15% on the increased Capital which, with the interim dividend of 6% already paid, makes 21% for the year, the same as last year and the figure which was forecast. It is proposed to place £20,000 to General Reserve, making this figure £140,000. The retrospective taxation liability does not permit any addition to the Profit and Loss account balance. In fact, it reduces the balance of retained profits from £81,492 to £73,825.

Fixed assets increased from £242,436 to £781,955 and net current assets from £437,323 to £699,449. These increases are mainly due to the merger with May Roberts.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR

The servicing of the capital outlay on the new premises will have to be taken into this coming year's accounts. Whilst no immediate benefits will accrue from this extra outlay, it is confidently expected that it will only be a matter of time until the whole Group will greatly benefit. Nothwithstanding increased costs resulting from higher sales and balanced by greater efficiency within the Group, it is with some confidence that I predict another successful year's trading.

The Pharmaceutical trade will, in the coming years, be well serviced by our Group with its Companies and Branches in Dublin, Carlow, Cork, Limerick, Sligo and Cavan. It will be our endeavour in the future, as it has been in the past, to give the best service we can to our customers.

We have always had an excellent relationship with our customers and staff and this co-operation continues to contribute to the results achieved. To everyone, whose efforts contributed to the year's results, I offer my thanks.

The Report and Accounts were adopted, and the Final Dividend, as recommended, was approved.

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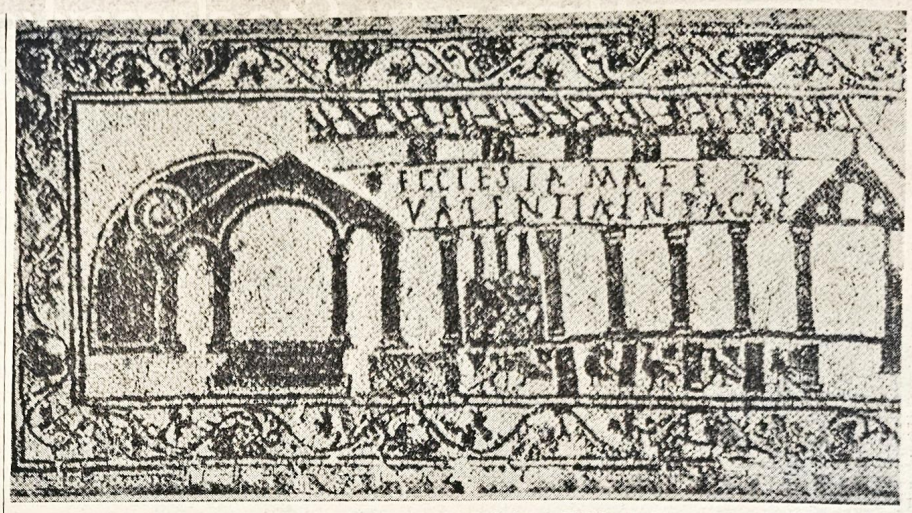

A mosaic from Thobraca (Tobarka, the North Tunisian coast), depicting a Christian basilica, circa, A.D. 400, one of the illustrations from "The Ancient Mediterranean," by Michael Grant (Weidenfeld and Nicolson).

Travel

WINTER SUN IN TUNISIA

Brendan Cardiff

CHOOSING A HOLIDAY resort in autumn can be difficult. Activity in the customary summer resorts tends to diminish in parallel with the intensity of the sunshine. So the autumnal holidaymaker thinks of points further south, Majorca, Malaga, Sicily, Rhodes. More recently Tunisia has been attracting a considerable degree of attention.

As a tourist country Tunisia is a newcomer. In fact, 90% of her tourist hotels have been erected in the last six years. And with her long Mediterranean coastline and proximity to the Sahara, the continued growth of her tourist industry seems assured. The climate is such as to allow for year-round tourism. This is particularly true of the touristically underdeveloped area around Djerba in the far south which enjoys Saharan heat even in winter. The more popular resorts in the north of the country enjoy a mild Mediterranean-type climate. Here the warm sunny autumn days can give way anytime from October onwards to occasional showers, but it is only very late in the season that the sea becomes unpleasantly cool for swimming. However, most hotels have their own pools, some of them heated in winter.

The two major tourist resorts in the country are at Hammamet and Sousse, both on the coast due south of the capital city Tunis, being 40 and 90 miles distant respectively. In fact, they constitute the only tourist centres in the country as Djerba, 340 miles south of Tunis, has only a few scattered hotels (including Club Mediterannée) which have not yet coalised into a resort.

Both Hammamet and Sousse have developed rather differently from most other Mediterranean resorts with the possible exception of Sardinia, near Caghari and some areas in Greece. In both cases the majority of the hotels are situated away from the tours which lend their names to the resorts. The typical hotel tends to be self-contained, with private beach, pool, spacious gardens and night-club. The hotels tend to be quite large with up to 800 beds and each somewhat distant from its nearest neighbour. Consequently, the social life in the resorts tends to centre on each individual hotel, with the more venture-some clients taking taxis in the evenings to nearby hotels —particularly those in which some specific form of entertainment has been organised.

The majority of the resorts' score of hotels are situated about two to five miles south of the town. Among these the more notable hotels are:

Hotel Park Plage, about two miles from the town, a first-class establishment mainly for elderly people and consequently rather quiet.

Hotel Miramar, about three miles from the town, is the most luxurious hotel in Hammamet, exceptionally well appointed though rather expensive.

Hotel Fourati, one of the oldest and most characteristic hotels in the resort. Has extensive grounds and private pool but rooms do not have baths.

Hotel Hammamet is separated from the beach by a roadway. A mixture of bungalows and hotel blocks, it is not exceptionally attractive.

Hotel Sheraton is a de luxe establishment where the inmates live in clinical isolation from the natives. Part of international chain of hotels.

Hotel El Aousten has over 800 beds. Inexpensive and quite comfortable, though the standard of hygiene in the kitchen is not the hotel's more celebrated feature.

Hotel Les Oranges, first-class establishment and probably the best hotel of them all. Both hotel and grounds most tastefully designed. Carefully supervised by owners.

The Samira Club, a holiday concentration camp into which over 800 young clients are packed by British and German supermarket travel agents.

Hotel Tanit is about three miles from the town centre and owned by a state company. Acceptable as an economy class hotel.

In contrast to Hammamet, Sousse is the third largest city in Tunisia. Tourism was started here in the early sixties by Mr. El Medoui, who owns the **Hotel Justinia** (300 beds) which, like the hotels **Sousse Palace. El Hana, Karaman** and **Sousse Palace,** is situated *in the city and separated from the public beach by* a main road. The innovators who initiated tourism in Sousse have been rather upstaged by the latecomers, who built their establishments right on the coast a few miles north of the city where the roadway does not separate hotel from beach.

The **Hotel Alyssa** is furthest north from the town and rather unimpressive. **Hotels Sherazade, Salem** and **Hill Diar** are probably the most attractive in the resort. Other acceptable establishments are the hotels **El Kasr, Marhaba** (30 acres of parkland and 900 beds), **Jamhara, Marahouh** and **Aoujaffar.** Points of interest to the tourist in Sousse itself are the Great Mosque, dating from the 9th century, the Museum and the Bazaar.

Practically all the hotels in the country have their own mini-bazaars where it is possible to buy Government-certified and price-controlled hand-made carpets. Leather-poufs and beaten-bronze tables are also very popular and inexpensive. But what took my fancy as a characteristic handicraft were the onion-shaped bird-cages made of white wire and blue wood—and often used as letter boxes in Tunisian hotels.

Although the majority of tourists to the country seem to prefer a quiet sedantary existence, the country proliferates with an abundance of historical monuments and sites as befits a country with a Carthaginian, Roman, Byzantine, Turkish, French and Arab past.

There are innumerable excursions available from both Hammamet and Sousse, including two and three-day "mini-safaris" to the enchanting oasis at Gabes and into the Sahara proper.

AS YET NO Irish travel agents arrange package holidays to Tunisia, but all will book Irish clients on English tours. The prices quoted below are all ex-London, so allowance must be made for the return fare from Dublin to London. The prices range from about £40 to over £100 for a fortnight, the main deciding factor being the quality of hotel used by the tour operator, Wings, of 124 Finchley Road, London N.W. 3, offer two weeks from £70, as do Horizon, of 17 Hanover Street, London W.1. Lunn-Poly, of 36 Edgware Road, Marble Arch, London W.2., has a two-week package from £43. Cooks, 45 Berkeley Street, London W1A, offer two weeks from £106 by scheduled airline; Cooks also arrange charter packages under the name Silver Wing, but prices are not available yet.

Finance Property Stockmarket Economics

FOREIGN CONTROL

ABOUT THIS TIME LAST YEAR, when the dust had settled on the Cement/Roadstone/Readymixed battle, the Minister for Industry and Commerce indicated that legislation to control the extent of foreign ownership of Irish industry would be introduced. Last week, yet another important local industry—John Halliday, the Dundalk shoe manufacturers—fell a victim to complete foreign absorption, but still we have had not a word from the Minister. Must we wait until there is nothing left to sell out?

The Minister's original statement indicated that the legislation could be very wide ranging. He proposed "to introduce legislation amending the existing restrictive Trade Practices Law which will provide for the investigation by the Fair Trade Commission of proposed or existing take-overs or mergers with a view to determining whether the public interest requires that a take-over or merger should be prohibited or restricted, or where the transaction has been completed, whether the merger or take-over should be required to be broken up." That statement was dated September, 1970. Amongst the foreign take-overs of public companies that have occurred since then have been Brown Thomas, McBirney and Irish Dunlop. The full extent of private take-overs is unknown.

The Halliday development exactly parallels the Irish Dunlop one of several months ago. In both cases the parent company has decided to buy in the minority Irish shareholding. The reasoning behind these moves is generally connected with the problems of group accounting. If the Irish company is a direct subsidiary, then there is no problem in the valuations of inter-company trading and the group board can take the profit in whatever one of the group's companies suits best at any time. For instance, with Irish company tax now standing at a higher rate than the U.K. equivalent, it makes little sense for Halliday's parent company, C. and J. Clarke Ltd., to be leaving major profits in the Irish company. Both Dunlops and Halliday's are long established manufacturing companies in Ireland. Both have received very considerable Government grants towards adaptation, etc. (though Dunlops have fared better in this respect) and both have a considerable stake in the distributive field (which in the Halliday case goes right into retail outlets).

A distinctive feature of Halliday's business has been the extent to which it has financed its expansion over the years through retained profits. It consistently retained a higher proportion of profits in the business than any other quoted Irish public company and because of this shareholders have enjoyed very appreciable (and tax-free) capital gain, particularly during the past decade.

From the Irish point of view, the importance of some local shareholding cannot be over-stated. Without some local representation, the whole objectives of an Irish-based subsidiary is reduced to merely serving the requirements of the parent. The horizon is restricted and the work of developing overseas markets is too easily abandoned. Too, the role, and ultimately the calibre, of the local management is reduced to serving the home market—keeping the shop open, as it were—while the fundamental decisions affecting the company are reserved to the top board, which controls the purse strings. Most of all this process is certain to atrophy enterprise—that one ingredient that is meant to distinguish the private sector of business.

There is no doubt that some guidelines for the foreign control of Irish business are long overdue. The Minister must outline those areas, such as banking and essential services, where foreign control is not only undesirable, but will not be tolerated. Secondly, he should require an undertaking concerning the future export activity and the continuing level of employment of any company that is to be taken over. Next, he should endeavour to have at least a minority interest remain to Irish shareholders.

Perhaps these objectives can be achieved by means other than legislation. For instance, the removal of the present tax imbalance vis-a-vis the U.K. might be more effective than any exhortation or coercion. But whatever the method, the Minister should not allow any more time to pass before he outlines the conditions and boundaries to foreign control of business in Ireland.

The Financial Editor

GOULDINGS—A BRIGHT FUTURE

AT A TIME when many other Irish companies are revising their profit forecasts downwards it is refreshing to find a company actually exceeding its forecast. A few weeks ago, W. and H. M. Goulding Ltd., fertiliser manufacturers, announced its preliminary profit figures. Pre tax profits for the year ended 30th June, 1971, amounted to £1,093,000 compared with £571,000 for the previous year. The latest profit figure was some £193,000 above the forecast made by the company last April.

Goulding's record for the past several years has left much to be desired. As recently as 1966 the company suffered a loss and in 1970 the return on capital employed was a mere 7%. The problems which plagued Gouldings in the past, however, now seem to have been overcome. In the late 1960s capacity for producing compound fertilisers (C.C.F.s) was greatly increased by the entry of State owned Nitrogen Eireann Teo. and Albatross Ltd. into this field. For a period there was a degree of over-capacity in the home industry. Given the highly capital intensive nature of fertiliser manufacture the existence of excess capacity played havoc with Goulding's profits. Moreover, the operation of price control made it difficult to maintain margins in a period of rapid inflation.

This past year the fertiliser cycle seems to have swung round. Demand has caught up capacity and the fuller utilisation of capacity is reflected in a sharp increase in profits. The dramatic nature of the turn-around in profits is clearly illustrated by the fact that although sales (of subsidiary companies only) increased by only 12½% between 1970-'71, the trading surplus of the subsidiary companies rose by 66¼%. Apart from the growth in volume the company has also benefited from a price increase. Indeed, Goulding's has been most fortunate in obtaining two price increases in the past year. In October, 1970, fertiliser prices were increased by 7% and the benefit of this increase was available for the main selling season last year. At the beginning of July, 1971, a further 7% increase in fertiliser prices was granted and this should contribute upwards of £650,000 to revenue in 1971/72. This latest price increase augurs well for Goulding's prospects in the current year.

Of the diversification companies the most important are Waterford Sack and Bag Co. (polythene sacks, polypropylene etc.) and Terrapin Ltd. (building interest). Profits from these two companies have been increasing and probably now account for around 10% of total profits. Further growth is anticipated here. A useful addition to earnings last year has been the higher dividend from the associated companies (Richardsons Fertilisers and Ulster Fertilisers).

No comment on Goulding's would be complete without some mention of the company's technical expertise. Early in 1971 it was announced that the Group's research division had discovered an original process for producing a new form of fertiliser. Such was the potential of Goulding's discovery that Pennzoil United Inc., a large U.S. oil company was prepared to pay a sum believed to be in excess of £100,000 for the patent rights. Goulding still retain the right to one-third of all royalty income. Shareholders will probably have to wait at least another year before the royalty income begins to flow through. Tenatively, it has been suggested that royalties in excess of $1,000,000 could accrue over a four or five year period.

The market has not been oblivious to the change in Goulding's fortunes. Since the beginning of the year the share price has moved steadily upward, from 40p to the present level of 58p. Even at the higher level, however, the income is generous. Accompanying the recent results was a three-point rise in the final dividend, making a total for the year of 12% (8% in 1970). To this must be added the tax free capital distribution of 3% making a total gross dividend of 16.6%. At 58p the shares yield an attractive 7.2%. The ordinary dividend is covered 2.6 times and the company has sufficient realised capital profits to pay a capital dividend of 3% for several years.

At the present time Goulding's must surely rank among the more interesting Irish equities. There is a useful income, with a 7% price increase under its belt the prospects for the fertiliser subsidiaries in 1971/72 look decidedly good. As an added bonus royalty income should begin to flow through in 1972/73. Increased activity on the property front can be anticipated which could be important (from a profit point of view) in the medium term. In sum the outlook for Goulding's now looks brighter than it has been for quite some time. With the current market capitalisation only £5.7m. (i.e. a little over five times last year's pre-tax profits) the shares still seem to have some way to go yet.

CAHILLS/MAY ROBERTS INTEGRATION

THE TAKE-OVER of May Roberts (Ireland) by P. C. Cahill last December was almost the perfect merger. The trade of the two companies is almost completely complementary and the distribution set-up was arranged as if a merger had been planned several years previously. The net effects of the merger, then, should be that the two businesses be completely integrated. In practical terms this means that Cahill's previously planned new Chapelizod warehouse should be able to cope with both Cahill's and May Roberts' Dublin region business; that on top of selling off Cahill's Bachelors Walk premises, May Roberts valuable Grand Canal Street premises should also be sold and its manufacturing division transferred out to Cahill's Harmonstown factory.

May Roberts' country depots at Limerick, Cavan and Carlow fit in perfectly with Cahill's two at Sligo and Cork, so while there will not be any benefit from a major reduction in capital employed, as in Dublin, there will be major scope to improve service distribution of both companies' products. Major savings should also be possible on the van fleet by increased utilisation. While the fact that there are major benefits to be got from the enlarged Cahill company, there has been very little effort to quantify the kind of cost reductions that are possible, and the latest accounts from Cahills for the year to April, 1971, do little to clarify the position. In fact, although Cahill's year ended over four months after the May Roberts take-over, the accounts of the two companies have still not been integrated.

May Robert's year was closed in January as if nothing had happened and Cahill's allowed its own year to continue on till April. This has meant that not only do we not get a proper consolidated balance sheet, as the two companies' accounts relate to different months, but that no attempt has been made to consolidate the Profit and Loss accounts at all. Cahill's is now going to change its year end to January to coincide with May Roberts next year, but this will shorten Cahill's trading period to nine months, so shareholders will have to wait until the accounts to January, 1973, are published before a full year's trading picture can be seen.

To get a view then of the present position on a yearly basis, it is necessary to analyse the available figures on an annualised basis. That this overall view is not easy to get at can be immediately seen from the major difference that exists in profitability between the two companies. May Roberts return on capital employed at 12¼% is only half that of Cahills at 25%. As far as the financial terms of the merger are concerned, the easier part to see is the effect that it has had on Cahill's asset backing per share. On the 1967 revaluation figures Cahill's asset backing per share worked out at 12s. (60p). A 60% revaluation surplus on Cahill's Batchelor Walk and Cork premises would lift this to 70p per share.

The asset backing after the merger based on 1970 May Robert valuation and 1967 Cahill valuation works out at 75p per share. Taking the same surplus as above in the Cahill prospectus, net asset backing comes out at something over 80p. So as far as assets go, there has not been about a 15% increase in per share backing.

On the profits side, it is interesting to work out the extent May Roberts figures will have to be improved to avoid diluting Cahill's earnings per share.

Cahill's pre-tax profits were £160,000 in 1970/'71. As its capital was increased by 53⅓% as a result of the May Robert acquisition, this means that this latter company will have to earn about £85,000 plus £17,000 to cover the interest on the loan stock also issued. This makes a grand total of £102,000. May Roberts only earned £75,000 last year, so it will have to boost its contribution by £27,000, if Cahill's earnings per share are to be maintained.

The sale of May Roberts' Grand Canal Street site plus Cahill's Batchelor Walk premises should bring in about £350,000. But the Chapelized warehouse is to cost over £200,000 so after spending some money on the Harmonstown factory, interest savings should amount to around £12,000. This still leaves a further £15,000 p.a. to be recovered. Integrating the van fleets should make a major contribution here, helped along by Cahill's making use of May Roberts under-utilised computer.

Cahill's appear to be very confident about current trading but costs of rationalising in Dublin could be heavy and shareholders should be fully aware that the combined pre-tax profits of £235,000 will have to rise to over £262,000 before there will be any earnings expansion. Despite all the progress Cahill's has made in past years it should be borne in mind that the current share price no more than reflects asset value. And besides this that the current make up of the joint balance, makes the company appear as much a property situation as much as anything else, as 40% of capital employed is tied up in land and bricks. The hounds are thus at Cahill's feet and while prospects appear bright, there is no getting away from the fact that the shares have yet to move off their asset base.

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SURVEY OF DEPOSIT RATES

Antoin Murphy

A BRIEF survey of some of the financial advertisements in the newspapers may prove confusing to many readers. Different rates are quoted for different periods, followed in some instances by statements such as "withdrawable on demand," "withdrawable on notice," "tax free," "tax not deducted" and so on. These advertisements indicate the vast array of different interest rates at the disposal of the interest conscious depositor.

Once again it is the purpose of this article to investigate these apparent imperfections and to determine where an investor might have secured the best reward on his deposit on Friday the 24th of September.

Unlike the survey last year, we are not faced with a bank dispute that effectively turned bank deposits, generally one of the most liquid deposits the investor may avail of, into fixed six month deposits. However, there was a new irregularity in this survey in that the Irish banks, unlike their British counterparts, had not changed their interest rates after the recent British Bank Rate change — as at September 24th.

The irregularity was that the Associated Banks in the South (or in Central Bank terms "within the State") were offering ¼% above their branches in the North for deposits under £25,000 and 2% above the Northern rate for deposits over £25,000.

Additionally, some of the subsidiaries of the Associated Banks such as Foster Finance and Ulster Merchant Finance were offering rates a full 1% below their deposit rate in the South to Northern depositors.

One wonders whether any perceptive Northern Ireland depositors switched their deposits down South as a result of this differential — it only takes a phone call to make such a switching effective.

The institutions surveyed are the same as those mentioned in last year's article (see *Hibernia* September 25, 1970). The list is not comprehensive but it is hoped that the institutions surveyed are in some way representative of the financial sector. The rates quoted by these institutions on sums ranging from £100 to £25,000 are given below. Some of these deposits, as was explained last year, are fixed term deposits and other notice deposits. A notice deposit rate may be changed at any time during the term of the deposit — in fact this usually arises when Bank Rate is changed. In the case of notice deposits it was presumed that the rates would remain fixed for a month — a somewhat doubtful assumption to make because it was hard to see the Irish Associated Banks reasons for not changing the rates by the 24th of September. In the case of notice deposits, it was presumed that the rates would remain fixed for a month. A fixed deposit means that the rate of interest quoted is guaranteed for a fixed period.

The period of the deposit was taken to be one month. It is necessary to take such a period because it is the minimum period for which money placed with an Associated Bank must be held before any interest accrues on it. Unfortunately, by taking such a period as a basis of comparison, the analysis in some instances is unfair to the companies listed below. Some of these institutions are not seeking short term funds and specialise in borrowing at the longer end of the market where they offer more attractive rates.

The rates offered by the merchant and investment banks for large sums (£25,000 and over) must also be interpreted with care. These rates can often fluctuate from hour to hour according as the portfolio manager of these institutions tries to balance his books. Most of these institutions gear their deposit rate to the London inter-bank market rate and according as this varies they will change their rates. It has become easier to gain information on the changes in interest rates for these large sums since the establishment in Dublin at the start of the year of two money market brokers—Caterbrokers and Murray Jones. These brokers act as pure information intermediaries, advising individuals and institutions as to the best rates available on the market for large deposits and loans.

The financial institutions have been divided into the same groupings as last year reflecting (1) the benefits that accrue to some institutions under the present taxation laws; (2) the position of the North American banks; (3) the different rates offered by the subsidiaries of the banking groups; (4) interest rates quoted by other institutions.

The first grouping is made up of the Associated Banks, the Post Office, the trustee savings banks and two merchant banks, Ansbacher and Guinness and Mahon. A depositor's first £70 interest (or in a joint husband and wife account £140) with these institutions is free from income tax. Thus, to the depositor earning around £70 interest or to joint husband and wife teams earning £140 these institutions are attractive from the income tax angle. The banks were offering 3½% and the trustee savings banks along with the Post Office were marginally better with 4%.

These institutions then were competitive with any of the finance companies who were offering rates below 6¾% (approx.) for the first £70 that was earned in interest. The most attractive institutions from this side were the two merchant banks, Ansbacher

(Continued in page 29)

INSTITUTION	£100	£500	£1,000	£5,000	£10,000	£25,000
Associated Banks						
Bank of Ireland ...	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	5
A.I.B.	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	5
Ulster	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	5
Northern	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	5
Investment Banking Subsidiaries of the Banking Groups						
I.B.I.	—	—	—	—	5½	5⅝
A.I.I.B.	—	—	—	—	—	5½
Hire Purchase Subsidiaries of the Banking Groups						
Hire Purchase Co. of Ireland	5½	5½	5½	5½	5½	5½
Foster Finance	—	6	6	6	6	6
U.M.F. Residents ...	—	6½	6½	6½	6½	6½
Non-Residents ...	—	5½	5½	5½	5½	5½
North American Banks						
Chase B. of I.	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	5⅜
F.N. Bank of Chicago	—	—	—	—	3¾	5⅜
Bank of America ...	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	5⅜
Bank of Nova Scotia	—	—	—	5½	5½	5½
First National City Bank (a) Resident	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	3¾	5½
(b) Non-Resident	4½	4½	4¾	5	5	5½
Institutions with Income Tax Concessions						
Guinness Mahon ...	—	—	—	4½	—	5½
Ansbacher	—	5¾	5¾	5¾	5¾	5¾
P.O. Savings Bank	4	4	4	4	—	—
Dublin Savings Bank	4	4	4	4	—	—
Building Societies						
I.P.B.S.						
Deposits	5½	5½	5½	5½	—	—
Savings Share	5½	5½	5½	5½	—	—
First National						
Deposits	4	4	4	4	—	—
Savings Share	5½	5½	5½	5½	—	—
Educational						
Deposits	5½	5½	5½	5½	—	—
Savings Share	6	6	6	6	—	—
Civil Service						
Deposits	4	4	4	4	—	—
Savings Share	5½	5½	5½	5½	—	—
Other Financial						
Hill Samuel	—	—	—	—	5½	5½
Lombard Bank	5½	5½	5½	5½	5½	5¾
United Dominions Trust	—	6½	6½	6½	6½	5¼
Julian S. Hodge ...	6 (7 Days)	6	6	6	6	6
Merchant Banking ...	5	5	5	5	—	—
Irish Buyway	—	7¼	7¼	7¼	7¼	7¼
Mercantile Credit ...	4	6	6	6	6	—
Credit Finance	8¼	8¼	8¼	8¼	8¼	—
Industrial Credit Co.	—	6¼	6¼	6¼	5¼	—
Agricultural Credit Co.	—	5½	5½	5½	5½	—
Royal Trust	—	—	—	5½	5½	5½

(Continued from page 28)

(minimum deposit £500) offering a rate of 5¼% tax free, equivalent to more than 8¼% gross, and Guinness and Mahon offering a rate between 4¾%-5¼%. However, the latter institution has a minimum deposit provision of £5,000.

But the really attractive institutions from the income tax viewpoint are the building societies. The building societies pay tax at a composite rate and offer tax free interest deposits to their customers on the first £5,000 deposited with them. A building society rate of 5¼% tax free is the equivalent of 8¼% tax paid. Thus other financial institutions have to offer a rate of better than 8¼% to be competitive with these institutions for sums up to £5,000. As may be seen from the table, no institutions were taking deposits over this rate.

The building society rates vary between 4% and 6%. The reason is that the depositor may avail of two separate accounts with them, the deposit account and the savings share account. The deposit account represents a first charge on the assets of the company and for this reason some companies pay a lower rate of interest on it (though some maintain that the rate is lower because the deposit may be withdrawn more quickly than the savings share account). It is doubtful if the large building societies could get into such a position that they would go into liquidation —which is what the deposit account really safeguards investors against by giving them first charge on the assets of the company.

It is difficult to envisage the Government toleratng such a situation — a building society going into liquidation might be the cause of large scale financial panic.

The distinction between the deposit account and the savings share account seems to be somewhat of an historical anachronism and its continued existence must be questioned. Indeed, one building society seems to distinguish no longer between the two accounts.

The rates offered by the investment banking subsidiaries of the Associated Banks (IBI and AIIB) and the North American bank rates (for deposits above £25,000) make interesting reading with the last two years' rates. In all cases the rates are around 2% below the rates quoted last year which were 2% below the 1969 rates, reflecting downward movements in the short term rate of interest. This may be attributable to changes in bank rates in both the U.S. and Europe, but it also reflects a depressed business situation in these islands with plenty of money available in both London and Dublin but a reluctance on the part of investors to borrow funds for investment purposes. The general availability of unutilised credit has been commented upon already with the Associated Banks in particular still well below the credit limits laid down by the Central Bank for the year. A further lowering of overdraft rates is surely called for in this type of situation.

The ready availability of money is further evidenced by the rates quoted in the "other financial" sector where some institutions were offering lower rates for large deposits (£10,000 and £25,000) than for deposits below £10,000. This was the case with Lombard Bank and United Dominions Trust (for deposits over £25,000) and the Industrial Credit Company (for deposits below £10,000).

The overall conclusion that I drew last year still applies, for none of the anomalies that attention has been focussed upon has been corrected. The taxation laws still give some institutions an advantage over others. Why should the Associated Banks and two merchant banks have special income tax concessions whilst other banking institutions do not? The American banks are still discriminated against in that they do not have any income tax concessions, are forced to conform to the Irish bank's cartel rate and can thus only effectively compete for funds, on a price basis, over the £25,000 mark. As against this the American banks have a great advantage over the Irish banks in that they are not closure prone and thus offer their customers an all the year round service.

The small Irish depositor is discriminated against in that there is a uniform bank deposit rate up to £25,000 whereas subsidiaries, backed to a large extent by the assets of the Associated Banks offer more attractive rates to the larger depositor.

For the last two years I have written that the interest gearing structure of the Associated Banks is in need of overhaul. The need for such an overhaul has become more acute for two reasons.

Firstly, the introduction of term loans means that the Associated Banks have the opportunity to pursue a policy of *differential* rates on borrowings. Should these differential rates on borrowing not be meshed in to differential rates on deposits?

Secondly, cartel rates on deposits in Britain have been abolished since October the 1st, as also has the distinction between the commercial banks and other financial intermediaries. With British banks competing actively for funds—the North American banks in London should see to that — discrepancies may arise between bank rate deposits here and in Britain (and also of course in the North of Ireland). A movement in rates in favour of the British banks could bring about a capital outflow to Britain because there are no capital restrictions between the two countries. Such a move might force the Irish banks to start competing for deposits on an interest rate basis rather than their existing dubious method of competing by way of the quality of services offered.

If banking in Ireland follows the changes made in Britain then not only will the banks be forced to compete on an interest rate basis for deposits but they will also be forced to abandon their control over the clearing system (to prevent any discrimination in the clearing of current accounts of their competitors). The clearing system would need to be vested in neutral hands—a move that could considerably benefit the economy if any further bank closures arose. In fact is it not time for the Irish banks to make some statement as to their future activities? Are they going to change like the British banks and start off a new competitive era for banking in Ireland? Or do they still prefer the existing system? If so one would be interested in the reasons behind such preferences.

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. . . AROUND THE CITY WITH MONEYBAGS. . .

PERHAPS you have forgotten about the £1 million that Irish Shipping deposited in Scotland shortly before the Upper Clyde collapse. Needless to say, I have not! The preliminary census results report a current population in the Free State of 2,971,230, which in effect means that at least 33p of mine—or the price of a pink gin—is at stake in this shipping crisis—and men have died for less. Indeed, if I exclude all the widows, orphans and other non-tax paying travellers in this community, I will probably find that my investment in Upper Clyde is the equivalent of a full case of brandy.

I am told that we will KNOW ALL within a few weeks—a month at the outside. The Irish Shipping boys are still confident of getting their four 26,000 tonners, and if anyone can squeeze even a canoe out of the Clyde I suppose **Willie O'Neill** will.

But I have my doubts. **Ted Heath** enjoys playing the tough guy—in business as well as in politics, and his blunder in the Upper Clyde is not dissimilar to his internment blunder in the North. I suggest, therefore, that he be given a taste of his medicine.

When Irish Shipping Ltd. deposited their £1,000,000 with Upper Clyde, the British Government already had a nominee on the board. He at that time, knew the true position in the shipyard.

There is no doubt therefore, that the British Government is morally — and probably legally—obliged to refund the deposit if they cannot deliver the goods.

The construction of engines for the vessels is apparently on time, but the yard work was due to commence last August. If Mr. Heath doesn't honour his obligations by the end of October, then shouldn't one default be matched by another? And I have a few good suggestions for later.

Damn it, the price of gin is going up all the time!

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HAS ANYBODY even the vaguest idea of what the war is actually costing the North? Estimates are hard enough to come by—I suppose because they would add to the general depression. The cost of physical damage to property, vehicles, etc., is only a fraction of it. So, too, is the military operation. But what I am thinking about is the gradual choke-up of the total industrial economy. (It's always wise to have a few hundred indestructible acres tucked away.)

The closure of the Grand Central Hotel was symbolic, though a cynical colleague assures me that the whiff of competition from the new Europa Hotel caused more damage than all the bombs. Advertising in the **Belfast Telegraph**—a good guide to business levels—is said to be halved. The property market is, of course, dead as a dodo, and new construction in Belfast at least, is naturally at a standstill.

Consumer spending on necessities continues, of course, but the variables in the economy are all pulling the wrong way: stocks are being run down (one publican, I was told, brings home his entire stock of spirits in a van each night), credit is required less and less by business, and, of course, the withholding of rents and rates is leading directly to a critical financial situation for some urban authorities. All of this adversely effects employment — but the real crunch in my opinion, is coming on the investment side. Over the past two years investment intentions taken before the outbreak of real trouble, have moved ahead from drawing board to construction and start up. That process, once set in motion, grinds slowly but certainly ahead. Obviously very few investment or expansion decisions were made in 1970 or 1971, and the slow-down from this lag will only soon become apparent.

There is only one near-parallel in our time for observers to consider—that of Spain 1939. It's a grim prospect indeed.

IF MY INVOLUNTARY investment in Upper Clyde is the equivalent of a pink gin, the £¼ million handed out to Murphy's Brewery through Taisci Stait must represent at least a pint of their porter. And something tells me that I'll be lucky to get even that as a dividend.

Watney Mann is, of course, happy to be clear of the mess of its own making but the Cork Brewery is not out of the woods yet. The first big problem is the selection of a new managing director. The consultants have submitted three names for consideration by the now expanded board (who would have believed that **Eddie Power** would have taken a seat on a **State** company) but I'm told that one of the directors wants to see the "reject" applications too. The trouble in Cork is that you can never be sure just who is related to whom. But its the wise consultant who checks on the local genealogy —that most vital qualification — before narrowing down its recommendations!

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ONE THEORY being voiced around Donegall Square is that the real nigger in the Northern woodpile is the British welfare state. Were it not for the welfare payments it is claimed, the present trouble could never continue.

There is a certain truth or at least half truth in this, of course. The strongest base from which to advocate economic scorched earth is that of the unemployed, corporation housed, state subsidised persona. (Incidentally did you note that the rent on these nice two-storey houses in Farrington Gardens that were burnt out last August, was only 17/- per week. When will they have the likes again?)

Anyhow **Donal Nevin** never tires of reminding one through his *Trade Union Information* how better prepared for lengthy revolutionary struggle are they North of the Border than here in the green South—though I believe the gap is closing.

I am referring to relative social payments on both sides of the border. For instance, weekly benefits for

	Republic	N.I.
Widows Pension ...	£5.00	£6.00
Widow with child ...	£6.00	£8.95
Family Allowances with 2 children ...	£0.98	£1.90
Sickness / Unemployment, single man or woman ...	£4.95	£6.00
Man and wife	£8.40	£9.70

These figures may be too detailed for you to bother with, so I will refer you to some of a more global nature —but to prove the same point;

Current Expenditure by public authorities on Social Services in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland, 1968/69, per head of population.

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	Republic	N.I.
Social Welfare	£29.0	£71.0
Education	£17.0	£32.2
Health	£15.1	£30.0
Housing	£4.0	£4.4
	£64.9	£137.5

The total expenditure in Northern Ireland under these headings in that year was £206.6 million, compared to only £189.0 million in the Republic; and the population comparisons are: N.I. 1.5 million, Republic 2.9 million. If the per capita expenditure on Social Services in the South was to be equalled with that of the North, we would have to MORE THAN DOUBLE our present spending; in fact, increase it by £223 million annually. But if it is true that there is a correlation between welfare payments and revolutionary survival, then the South is obviously way ahead!

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THERE IS A TOUCH of the Log Cabin to White House romance about the Rohan Group prospectus: "In 1961 I acquired and re-opened a sand and gravel quarry at Ballinacurra, Midleton, Co. Cork, which I operated as a sole trader until 1967 . . On 9th September, 1971, the name of the company was altered to Rohan Group Ltd., and on 27th September, 1971, the company became a public company." A mere decade of rough stuff (didn't **Abraham Lincoln** split rail posts for that long!) and the 34-year-old ***John S. Rohan*** ends up the beneficial owner of no less than 1,137,346 ordinary shares, the market value of which is somewhere around £850,000. Who would have thought it possible that day back in the Ballinacurra gravel pit in 1961.

All the vital statistics now look good. Group profit doubled in 1970 and again in 1971 to a pre-tax level of £188,000. After tax, however, this is reduced to £94,000, which when related to the new capitalisation of the company is the equivalent of only 5p per each ordinary 10p share. These are being offered to the public at 73p each and as I write I have no doubt that the public will push them ahead of the issued price—in other words to a level in excess of 15 times per-share net earnings. At this rate of going I wonder how the market will value the **McInerney** shares which should soon be following suit. In my opinion John Rohan was well advised to get to the market ahead of McInerney—but my counsel to some colleagues at the Club has been to hold off some cash to see what terms the big builder will offer. There are a lot of gravel pits to be dug yet.

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THE JUST PUBLISHED preliminary results of the Brittain Group will not please some friends of mine, even though I had warned them to expect the worst. **Vincent Brittain,** himself, with half the equity is hardly likely to be jumping for joy either. It is now 17 months since any word has been issued by the Group about its progress and over 2 years since a full set of accounts have been published. The present set of accounts will thus have to cover 2 accounting periods, 1969/'70 and 1970/'71.

But, while the results themselves are bad enough for the Brittain shareholders, the absence of any ordinary dividend payment for these two years really rubs the salt into the unfortunate outside shareholders in Booth Poole. These shareholders' "B" shares had a net asset backing of as much as 11/5 (57p) each in April, 1969, revaluations, and this ignores any goodwill element at all. In May, 1970, these shareholders were forced to accept Brittain paper—an arrangement recommended by the Investmnt Bank of Ireland—which consisted of 25% of a Preference share, plus 60% of an Ordinary share in Brittains. This paper appeared to have a valuation at the time of about 8/6 (42½p) for each Booth Poole share well under asset value.

When this paper was first quoted, its value came out much lower, and this has sunk further since. Today, with Brittain shares around 12p each, this paper is only worth 4/- (20p) per each old Booth Poole share, or about one-third what its net asset value was 2 years ago.

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RYAN-TRADERS DISTRIBUTION are the holders of £150,000 of 9% Participating Preference Shares in Ryan Tourist Holdings. The point to be noted about these Preference shares is that the dividend on them increases pari-passu with the R.T.H. ordinary up to a maximum of 12½%. The base R.T.H. dividend to be used is the 22% paid for the year ended 31st August 1970.

In Ryan-Traders prospectus reference is made to "an annual average growth rate of 35.9% in Ryans Tourist Holdings earnings per share since 1965". Having gone to the trouble of stating this growth rate, the implication obviously meant to be drawn is that this earning-per-share growth will continue. But will it? It would only require a 16% increase in R.T. Holding's dividend to bring the maximum participating element in the R.T.H. Preference shares into action. This would be only half the growth rate stated for R.T.H. ordinary share's earnings, and would thus appear to be a reasonable modest achievement.

Ryan's Tourist Holdings financial year ended nearly 2 months so **Dermot Ryan,** at least, must know by his management accounts, the unaudited outcome for 1970/71. But in the Ryan-Trader's prospectus the income from its R.T.H. Preference shares is calculated without any participating element included. The big question then is, are Ryans Tourist Holdings 1970/71 results so disappointing that no increase in ordinary dividend will be declared? Its shares at 21p already have a droopy look, standing 58% below their 1969 high. Perhaps the market has got the message or has Dermot Ryan passed up the opportunity to boost the projected net profits of Traders by a full 10%?

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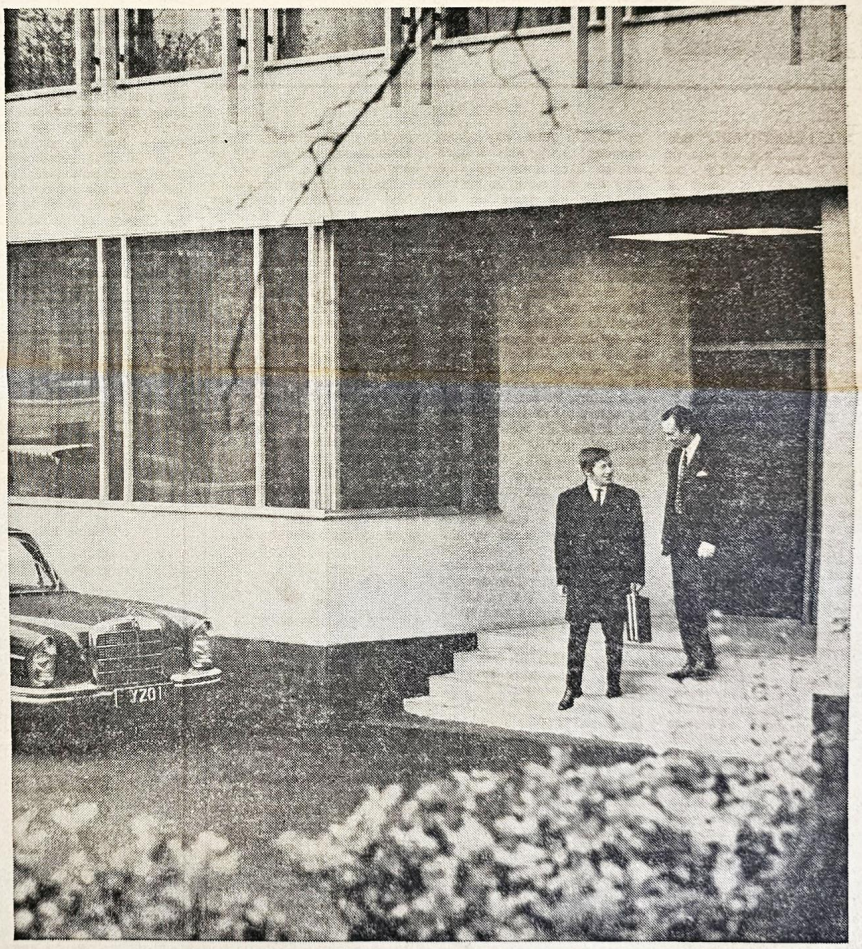
FORECASTING is a foolish business at the best of times—but financial forecasting is the most perilous of all brands of crystal gazing. Exactly one year ago, when the Roadstone and Cement giants were locked in what appeared to be mortal combat for the favour of their shareholders' support, some very rash forecasts were made: "18% dividend this year," promised Cement; "Not less than 18% dividend this year," countered Roadstone. Now that it's all over bar the disappointments, the actuality falls short of the forecast—of course. "The total dividend on the ordinary capital for 1971 will not be less than 15%," announce the joint board in an interim statement. The short fall is explained away in the usual list of business woes—higher taxation, inflation of costs, price control, etc.—that have become monotonously boring to Irish shareholders. But allow me to offer a word of consolation to the Cement/Roadstone investors.

The interim result may be the best thing that could have happened to you at this stage. If my memory serves me right, negotiations on the conditions of a new Cement licence must be in progress now and the all-important conditions under which the price of cement will be increased in the future, are now being thrashed out. Even if the profit had been there, this might have been a most unfortunate time for the company to reveal its full profitability. For your longer term welfare therefore, the present result may not be the worst thing at all.

The Platin works are due to start production in January, 1972, and will then supply the 400,000 tons p.a. of cement, that the group is now importing—probably at a loss—to plug the difference between current Irish output (1,200,000 tons) and current Irish consumption (1,600,000). This should greatly improve profitability in 1972. Meantime, **Bill Murray** is ploughing away with his integration plans, and the quicker these see the light of day, and a new chairman is appointed, the sooner the real benefits from the merger may begin to flow. Things could easily be much worse.

Mind you, if you had accepted the Ready Mixed offer . . .



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PERSONALLY SPEAKING

Criostoir O Floinn

"CALL ME ISHMAEL," said Melville, beginning the saga of Moby Dick. "Call me Eamonn," said the Bishop of Kerry, when he came into his Kingdom.

The Bishop of Kerry is a very jolly man. He never goes on television or into news photos without his jolly laugh. Himself and **Neil Blaney,** T.D. (Donegal True-Republican and half-Lynch Fianna Fáil), a man who seems to have little to laugh about for some time past, are well-known as a bridge-opening combination — you remember how, in two distinct tape-cutting functions, under different circuits of the Moon, they ceremonially declared the bridge to Valentia Island to be open for public use many moons after it had actually come into use by the natives. Call-me-Eamonn used a scissors and holy water, Neil used a scissors . . .

The other day, there was another jolly photo on the papers of **Call-me-Eamonn,** dressed in his full pontificals (or episcopicals?), purple and lace and the divil-knows-what, and he cutting another ribbon and shaking more holy water, not on a bridge this time, but on a new motor salesrooms in Tralee (to ensure a holy and happy death for all who would be killed by these shiny new cars on the twisty mountainy roads of the Kingdom). When he was himself a curate in Limerick, Father Eamonn was a shocking driver—oh, a great man at the wheel, mind you, but **shocking** in the sense that the passengers would be whispering fervent Acts of Contrition at every bend of the road, and would stagger out at the end of all saying, **Glory-be-to-God! Glory-be-to-God!**

The jolly curate, as he then was, held the unofficial record for the Limerick-to-Dublin dash, closely followed by **Dickie** (now Richard) **Harris.** Indeed, it is widely believed in Limerick (which is traditionally and incorrigibly—if the writers in Dublin's high-toned journals are to be believed—a widely-believing city) that speed-limits were introduced in this State after **Donagh O'Malley** got a lift to Dublin one day from Eamonn Casey, and stepped out on terra firma muttering only the one word, **Jaysus!**

During his years on the Foreign Mission in pagan England, **Call - me - Eamonn** earned (and I mean earned) a national reputation for his activities in helping citizens of all denominations to find or build or buy a home. Back home in Christian Ireland, it has apparently become obvious to the jolly Bishop that the kind of day-to-day activities he engaged in abroad could, with safety, be left to devoted lay activists like **Hilary Boyle** and **Máirín de Búrca,** while Eamonn himself would be getting on with the truly episcopal tasks of opening more bridges and shops.

Give every man his due—even if he's a bishop or a Jesuit—I never stroll up the hill of Gardiner street in Dublin's fair city without contemplating **Father Tom Scully's** fine block of flats, as telling a memorial as any man could leave behind him, and regretting that the Pope is infallible only in matters of faith and morals. If he would send the Pauline **Dr. McQuaid** to convert the Kingdom from Puckology and Football, and set up the bould Eamonn as a real metropolitan in one of Tom Scully's flats, even the lapsed Catholics of Dublin might catch the Kerry chuckle and contribute to the preservation of Dublin for the people.

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I'M SAVING UP to buy **Thomas Kilroy's** new novel, *The Big Chapel,* which has had laudatory reviews from the crafty types who get a free copy and a fee as well. At nearly three pounds, it must remain on my Santa Claus list. In the meantime, I can unselfishly (having got my own copy first) direct you to the best book bargain in years. For five bob you can buy, while stocks last, the *Life of Wolfe Tone,* based on his own writings and those of his son. A hard-cover book, 716 pages, excellent printing. **Roy Johnson, Uinseann Mac Eoin** and other leading members of the Wolfe Tone Society will naturally be first in the queue.

The fact that this book is an Irish translation (from the original published in Washington in 1826) will not, I am sure, prove a deterrent to any member of the educated class. Anglophobic monoglots and members of the L.F.M. might consider the book a good investment for domestic, non-literary use. It might also come in handy to prop up old tables or for the reinforcement of weak arguments. Have you the biro ready? Now, across the lane from Woolworth's (Henry street) side-door, there is a literary shebeen where the Government of **Poblacht na hEireann** quietly disposes of books in the native language. Knock three times, say Harry sent you, and give the password: **Scandinavian tourist.**

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WHILE ON MY WAY, in a recent issue, to inquire of a provincial Catholic school manager by what right he made the appointment of a female teacher contingent upon her ability to train the church choir, I wondered parenthetically why the Protestant bishops and school authorities advertised church services, jobs, school openings, etc., exclusively in *The Irish Times.* A distinguished Protestant clergyman has written to me explaining that *The Irish Times* has always published these Protestant advertisements free of charge; but he points out that this does not necessarily imply approval of the editorial policies of that newspaper by Protestant bishops or school managers. I have no doubt that this courteous and candid comment will give food for thought to the aforementioned provincial Catholic school manager.

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WHAT STRANGE BEDFELLOWS, in the literal sense of that literary term, would not **Senator Mary Robinson** and **Mr. Joseph Foyle** make! Mary would allow contraception and divorce—after deep conscientious thought, of course. Joseph's unambiguous position on bedroom politics requires no thought. Yet, the ways of God are strange, and, in the metaphorical sense, this ill-assorted pair have come happily together. Senator Mrs. Robinson calls on the housewives of Ireland to speak out, not (as one might expect) against profiteering in foodstuffs or the black market in contraceptive pills and devices, but against "the I.R.A. gunmen" (housewives who are wives or sisters of said *gunmen* need not speak so loud; a conversational domestic admonition will surely satisfy the peace-loving Senator's requirements). Mr. Foyle, from his Holy Roman Embassy at Leeson Park (a close neighbour of Séan MacEntee's, mark you!) declares in his regular epistle to the believers, which he calls the *Catholic Media-Receiver:*

"It is not easy for a Catholic and/or a Nationalist to stand up and condemn the I.R.A. in isolation. Yet the facts of the case would appear to merit this . . . The one-sided use of detention - without - charges" what you unhyphenating peasants call internment "is due simply to the I.R.A. and People's Democracy agitators being the only trouble-makers —in recent times at any rate. Only the I.R.A. are the dangers to peace. Also, the British Army still remain the N.I. peacemakers."

The Archbishop of Canterbury and our own scholarly **Dr. Simms** of Armagh (late of Dublin) join in blessing this politico-theological union of our happy couple, Mary and Joseph. (What the product might be, only God knows). The Catholic Hierarchy, however, meeting at Maynooth, appear not to have heard the Messianic news from Seanad Éireann and Leeson Park. "We cannot accept the view that the sole cause of the present upheaval lies with those who are promoting violence," say the bishops. And: "We must also say that the present use of internment, with its violation of human rights, is contributing in a notable measure to a continuance of this situation."

What a pity the Catholic bishops do not subscribe to the *Catholic Media-Receiver.* Some thoughtful citizens may find consolation in the discovery that Mary and Joseph are on the same level.

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THE SPECIAL BRANCH man who saw me talking to **Tomás Mac Giolla,** President of Gardiner Street Sinn Féin, outside Groome's Hotel on a cool night some time back was not willing to get near enough to hear our chat. His colleagues who keep an eye on *Hibernia's* back page can inform him that Tomás and myself were discussing the play in the Gate Theatre across the road, a piece by a Mr. Wilde entitled *The Importance of Being Earnest.* One night this week, I may be seen in or around the same position, discussing with **Ruairí Ó Brádaigh,** Uachtarán Sinn Féin (Sráid Chaoimhín) the current production. Mr. Shaw's *Arms and the Man.*

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